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## ASPECTS OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE



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SANSKRIT LITERATURE

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These studies, written between 1925 and 1955, deal with some aspects of Sanskrit Literature and form, as such, a supplement to the Author's well known *History of Sanskrit Literature*. Written in a scholarly but easily intelligible manner, they will be found interesting alike to scholars and general readers.

December 15, 1959

The Publisher

TO

DR. L. D. BARNETT

*as a token of esteem and admiration*



## A NOTE ON THE SANSKRIT MONOLOGUE-PLAY (BHĀÑA), WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CATURBHĀÑI

Popular and (as attested by theory) undoubtedly old as the Bhāñas must have been, the specimens of this form of composition which have been hitherto known to exist belong to comparatively recent times. Considerable importance, therefore, attaches to the discovery and publication (1922) of four Bhāñas, under the title *Caturbhāñi*, by M. Ramakrishna Kavi and S. K. Ramanatha Sastri from Śivapurī, for which great antiquity is claimed by the editors and which, whatever might be their date, are certainly older than any of the late existing specimens. The *Caturbhāñi* consist of *Ubbhayābhīsārikā* (*Ubh*), *Padma-prābhṛtaka* (*Pp*), *Dhūrta-viṣa-samvāda* (*Dvs*) and *Pādatāditaka* (*Pt*), ascribed respectively, on the authority chiefly of a traditional verse, to Vararuci, Śūdraka, Iśvaradatta and Śyāmilaka. A. B. Keith, in his *Sanskrit Drama* (p. 185, fn. 3), throws doubt on the first two ascriptions, and declares rather dogmatically that "none of these plays need be older than 1000 A. D.". On the other hand, F. W. Thomas, who called attention to these plays in his paper entitled "Four Sanskrit Plays", contributed to the *Centenary Supplement* to the *JRAS* (pp. 123-36), has also published<sup>1</sup> a short note on the last-named of these Bhāñas, in which he suggests for Śyāmilaka "a date considerably earlier than the lower limit fixed by the reference of Abhinavagupta", and would place it "in the time of Harṣa of Kanauj or even that of the later Guptas", on the strength not only of certain facts indicated in the play itself, but also on the ground of its "lexicographical and stylistic affinities to Bāñña". The object of the present paper is to follow up the line of inquiry indicated by F. W. Thomas, and discuss certain points of interest in these Bhāñas which would differentiate them from later Bhāñas, and thus indirectly help to determine their age.

<sup>1</sup> *JRAS*, 1924, pp. 262-5. The present essay (*JRAS*, 1926) was written before the *Cent. Suppl.* reached the writer; revision, however became necessary in the light of F. W. Thomas's very suggestive articles.

Having regard to the obviously popular character and origin of the Bhāṇa, the surmise is not improbable that it must have had at one time considerable vogue ; but, apart from the four plays under discussion, the earliest of the Bhāṇas hitherto available does not probably go beyond the thirteenth century A.D. ; and to judge from existing specimens, the most flourishing period of Bhāṇa-writing appears to have fallen between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is curious, however, that most of these Bhāṇas belong to South India, which seems to have specialized in this form of composition in later times ; but they lack variety and exhibit such a general sameness of characteristics that the analysis of a single Bhāṇa of this group would suffice to give us a fair idea of their form and content, which follow in general the rules laid down in such latter works on Dramaturgy as *Dāśa-rūpaka*.

It is also remarkable that, while the definitions given of some other species of literary composition by writers on Alāṅkāra have, with changing times, very often undergone considerable modification<sup>1</sup>, the definition of the Bhāṇa from Bharata down to Viśvanātha has remained severely stereotyped. It does not seem possible, therefore, to draw any definite conclusion regarding the development of this species from the writings of the theorists. It is fortunate, however, that in spite of this rigid conservatism, a closer examination actually reveals one or two little and apparently unimportant modifications, made by the theorists (as well as noticeable in later practitioners of the type), which throw some light on the question.

Bharata's description of the Bhāṇa, which is taken as authoritative, is as follows<sup>2</sup> (xviii. 152-4) :—

ātmānubhūta-śāṁśī para-saṁśraya-varṇanā-viśeṣaś ca<sup>3</sup> |  
dvividhāśrayo<sup>4</sup> hi bhāṇo vijñeyas tveka-hātṛyaś ca ||

<sup>1</sup> As I have attempted to show in the case of the Kathā and the Ākhyāyikā in an article in *BSOS*, vol. iii, pp. 507 f.

<sup>2</sup> This passage in the printed text (Kāvyaṁlā ed.) is frankly corrupt ; but emendations can be gathered from the readings of Abhinavagupta in his commentary, as well as from Hemacandra and the younger Vāgbhaṭa, who quote these verses. Hemacandra in his commentary on these verses appropriates a great deal of Abhinava's commentary on Bharata.

<sup>3</sup> *viśeṣaś* in the text ; *varṇanā-prayuktas* *ca* in Hemacandra and Vāgbhaṭa.

<sup>4</sup> *dvividhāśrayo* (H and V)

para-vacanam ātma-saṁsthaiḥ prativacanair uttarottara-grathitaiḥ<sup>1</sup> |

ākāśa-puruṣa-kathitair aṅga-vikārair abhinayec ca<sup>2</sup> ||  
dhūrta-viṭa-saṁprayojyo nānāvasthāntarātmakaś caiva ||  
ekānko<sup>3</sup> bahu-çeṣṭāḥ kāryo budhair bhāṇah<sup>4</sup> ||

Freely translated : "A Bhāṇa, which should be conveyed by one person, depends on two things, either it describes one's own experience or is characterized by descriptions relating to another person. One should enact the words of another person by means of retorts, originating in oneself and progressively strung together, as well as by verbal gestures and voices spoken in the air. It should be set forth by a roguish parasite in one act, and consist of many and varied situations and movements." Elsewhere Bharata lays down the technical requirements that in a Bhāṇa the elements of the Lāsyā (a kind of dance) are specially appropriate (xviii. 169), that it should contain (xix. 45) only two Saṁdhis or junctures, the first and the last (*mukha* and *nirvahaya*), and that it should exclude the Kaiśīkī Vṛtti (xviii. 8-9). All these taken together would indicate that in Bharata's time the characteristics of the Bhāṇa were

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>grathite in the text

<sup>3</sup> abhinayaś cāpi in the text.

<sup>4</sup> ekānko in the text.

<sup>4</sup> Abhinaya's comment on this verse, as given in my MS is as follows : *attha hāsyā-rasocita-viṭa-dhūrtādyānuprarecēna saṁnā-yoga-kṣemāṇa* (referring to *prahasana* commented on immediately before) *bhāṇaḥ* *lakṣayitum* *āha—ātmānubhūta-saṁsāti*. *ekena* *pōtreṇa karaṇīyāḥ* *ādmājika-hṛdayām* *prāparyitargo'rtha* *yatra sa bhāṇah*. *eka-mukhenaicā bhāṇyante* *uktīmantāḥ* *kriyante* *aprīṣṭā* *api* *pāṭra-viśeṣā* *yatreṇi bhāṇoḥ*. *tatra* *sa prīṣṭāḥ* *pāṭra-riśāḥ* *ātmānubhūtaḥ* *saṁsāti* *para-gataḥ* *vā* *vartayati*. *tatra* *ca* *prāyoga-prāyuktīm* *āha—para-vacanam* *iti*. *para-saṁbandhi* *vacanāḥ* *svayam* *aṅga-vikārair* *abhinayet*. *nanu* *tat* *para-vacanam* *uktāḥ* *kathām* *abhinayet* *ityāha—ākāśe* *śāṇye* *yāni* *paruṣa-kathitāni* *drṣṭāni*, *yatra* *śāṇye* *tena* *vartayante* *vā* *kaśeit* *pāṭyāḥ* *ākāṣagāḥ* *ra*, *tad* *vacanām* *sa* *erānurādān* *ādmājikān* *bodhaya* *ti*. *yathā—bodhabale* (?) *kiṁ* *brāhmaṇyādāu*. *na* *kevalām* *para-vacanam* *abhinayet*, *kiśi* *tu* *svaktaīḥ* *saha*, *ata* *ecottarottara-grathitair* *yejanābhir* *upalakṣitaiḥ*. *nanu* *yo'ste* *ekāḥ* *prarīṣati* *sa* *ka* *ityāha—dhūrta-viṭet*. *nānā-prakārāvasthā-riśeṣāḥ* *lokopayogī-ryārakārātmā* *vṛdayām* *yasya*, *ata* *eva* *bahu-çeṣṭāḥ* *satataḥ* *kārya* *iti*. *sakala-sāmānya-prīṭhīg-janopayogī* *atra* *loka-ryavakāro* *veśyā-viṭādi-vṛttāntātmā* *nirūpyata* *iti* *bāhulyena* *prīṭhīg-jana-ryutpatti-upayogī* *rūpākam* *idam*.

(i) that it consisted of various situations and movements describing one's own or another's adventures, (ii) set forth in one act but in two junctures, (iii) by one character on the stage, viz. a roguish parasite (*viṭa*), who is described elsewhere as a poet, sweet-natured, eloquent, sharp-witted, amiable (*dakṣīṇa*) in his amours, and skilled in the arts of dialectic and in the ways of the courtesan, (iv) by means of appropriate verbal gestures, (v) the action progressing by a chain of answers given by him to imaginary words spoken in the air<sup>1</sup>, and (vi) that while the elements of the *Lāsyā* are in place in it, the *Kaiśiki Vṛtti*, the graceful style, which gives scope to love and gallantry, is out of place. The requirement regarding *Lāsyā*, as Sten Konow thinks, probably emphasizes its popular origin and development from a primitive mimetic performance; but little trace of it remains in the extant *Bhāṇas*, and it may be taken as a survival in theory of what was probably once its peculiar feature in practice. The association with the *Viṭa* as the only character may also point to the comic and erotic nature of the *Bhāṇa* in general; but it is important to note that Bharata distinctly forbids the *Kaiśiki Vṛtti*, which is eminently suitable to an erotic play, and is remarkably silent with regard to the nature of the sentiment which should prevail in this type of the drama, while he is also not explicit on the question of its subject-matter or plot.

These deficiencies, if deficiencies they are, are supplied by Dhanañjaya (end of the tenth century) in his *Daśa-rūpaka*. Following Bharata generally, he takes care to add definitely that the *Bhāṇa* should be composed in the *Bhāraṭī Vṛtti* (which fact is utilized for a somewhat fanciful etymology of the term)<sup>2</sup>, and that the dominant sentiment should be the heroic (*vīra*) and the erotic (*śringāra*) depicted by a description of heroism and fortune in love (*saubhāgya*) respectively. It should be noted

<sup>1</sup> I.e. he pretends to see and hear others speak or act, and asks "what do you say?", himself then repeating the imagined answer.

<sup>2</sup> *bbhārati-vṛtti-pradhānatrād bbhāṣay* (Dhanika). The derivation from *bbhāṣ* is probably meant to suit the character of the composition in which only one person speaks, the place of interlocutors being supplied by copious use of *ākāṣa-bbhaṣita*. The etymology of the term, which is probably one of the Prakrit relics of the primitive drama, is uncertain, and it is not noticed in the earlier lexicons of Amara and Sāīvata.

that while the erotic as a sentiment prevails in all Bhāṇas, the heroic is dropped entirely. It is somewhat surprising, however, that the comic aspect of the Bhāṇa is not brought into relief either by Bharata or by Dhanañjaya, although this is probably implied by the fact that the Bhāṇa in its nature is closely allied to the Prahasana (farce), and is associated with characters capable of "low comedy". Abhinava, in his comment on Bharata, speaks of the association of characters like the Viṭa as *hāsyocita* and regards the Bhāṇa as *samānayoga-kṣema* with the Prahasana. He also maintains elsewhere that in Utsṛṣṭāṅka, Prahasana, and Bhāṇa, the principal sentiments should be Karuṇa, Hāsyā, and Vismaya, but nowhere speaks of the erotic as essential. Dhanañjaya's insistence, however, that the Bhāṇa should be composed in the Bhāratī Vṛtti, in which the verbal manner prevails, was probably due to the prevalence of the comic element (which diminishes in later Bhāṇas) in the Bhāṇas in or before his time; for one of the four elements of the Bhāratī Vṛtti reckoned from Bharata's time is farce or Prahasana, which is itself a species of the drama. This Vṛtti, or dramatic style, based entirely on verbal expression (*vākpradhāna*), is employed only by men and not by women, and the language used is throughout Sanskrit (as in the Bhāṇas generally).

The later theorists<sup>1</sup> only repeat in their own words what is said by Dhanañjaya, so that it may be taken for granted that the Bhāṇa and its definition became stereotyped after Dhanañjaya's time. Viśvanātha only makes clear that Dhanañjaya's statement *bhūyasa bhāratī vṛtih* means *prāyena bhāratī, kvāpi kaiśiky api vṛttir bhavati*, thus going directly against Bharata's injunction that the Bhāṇa should avoid the Kaiśiki Vṛtti.<sup>2</sup> This modification is notable because this graceful manner, appropriate to the erotic sentiment, employs song, dance and lovely raiments, allows both male and female rôles, and admits

<sup>1</sup> Viśvanātha (ed. Durgāprasāda, 1915), vi. 227-30; Śīṅgabhūpāla, iii, 232 f; Vidyānātha, ed. Trivedi, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Kohala, who came after Bharata, favoured Kaiśiki in the case of the erotic, the comic, and the pathetic sentiments; but Abhinavagupta vigorously disputes this opinion: *yat tu śpāgāra-hāsyā-karuṇair iha kaiśiki eyād iti kohalenoktam, tan muni-mata-virodhād upakṣyam eva... etas te prahasana-bhāṇayor api vāg-vyāpāra-prādhānyād era bhāratī vṛttih.*

love, gallantry, coquetry and jesting, involving pleasantry (*narman*) based on what is comic in speech, dress and movement, as well as giving scope to various degrees of the manifestation of love. It is clear that the question lies between the Bhāratī and the Kaiśikī Vṛttis, the other two Vṛttis (Sāttvatī and Ārabhaṭī), emphasizing the grand and the violent manners respectively, being clearly out of place; but the older writers, probably having regard to the comic character of the Bhāṇas of their time, declare themselves in favour of the Bhāratī; while the persistently erotic character of later Bhāṇas probably made Viśvanātha allow an exception in favour of the Kaiśikī.

It is by no means correct to say that these definitions of the theorists have only an academic value and do not in themselves reflect conditions of actual literary practice. On the contrary, there is enough evidence<sup>1</sup> to establish the *a posteriori* character of most of these speculations; and a distinct anxiety is often noticeable on the part of the theorists (in spite of their conservative reverence for established authority) to do justice to facts and base their rules and definitions, to a great extent, on a direct observation of literary phenomena. It is, therefore, not too much to maintain that, if two writers on theory differ materially on some essential points in their definitions, the difference should be explained as due to the probability that the particular species of composition defined must have developed or changed in the interval to the extent of inducing later theorists to make enough modifications of earlier definitions. The Bhāṇa, as a species of the drama, cannot be said to have developed much, and its definitions, therefore, are not remarkably divergent; but the above discussion will show that there are indications, however slight, of some inevitable change in the nature of the Bhāṇa between the time of Bharata and that of Dhāraṇījaya.

We may now turn to the four Bhāṇas in question, as well as to the group of later South Indian Bhāṇas, and consider how far these speculations of the Ālamkārikas bear upon the question of the development of the Bhāṇa in general. The actually published Bhāṇas of later times to which I had access are:—

1. *Śringāra-bhūṣāṇa* (*Sbh*) of Vāmana Bhatta Bāṇa of

<sup>1</sup> This question is discussed in my *Sanskrit Poetics*, vol. ii.

Koṇḍaviḍu (end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century), ed. Śivadatta and Parab, NSP, 2nd ed., Bombay 1910.

2. *Mukundānanda* (*Mk*) of Kāśīpati Kavirāja, described in the Prologue as a *miśra bhāṣya*<sup>1</sup> (not earlier than the thirteenth century, perhaps much later), ed. Kāvyamālā 16, Bombay 1894. (Also ed. Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. 4, 1917.)

3. *Vasanta-tilaka* (*Vt*) of Varadācārya of Kāñcī, the Vaiṣṇava teacher, ed. Damaruvallabha Śarman, Calcutta Sahivat 1925 (1868). (Also ed. Jīvānanda, Calcutta 1872 : ed. Vāvīlla Rāmānujācārya, Madras 1874.)

4. *Śrīgāra-tilaka* (*St*) of Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita, written to rival No. 3 (end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century), ed. Kāvyamālā 44, Bombay 1910.

5. *Śrīgāra-sarvasva* (*Ss*) of Nallā Kavi (about A.D. 1700), ed. Kāvyamālā 78, Bombay 1911.

6. *Rasa-sadana* (*Rs*) of Yuvarāja from Kotiliṅga in Kerala<sup>2</sup>, ed. Kāvyamālā 37, Bombay 1922, and

7. *Karpūra-carita* (*Kc*) of Vatsarāja of Kālañjara (end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century), ed. Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. 8, 1918. This is probably the earliest extant specimen of later Bhāṣas, but it cannot be strictly classified with the above group<sup>3</sup>.

Excepting *Kc* and *Mk*, which are older in date and which do not belong to Southern India, all the other Bhāṣas mentioned in the above list bear a striking similarity to each other in their form and content, as well as in their place of origin. The

<sup>1</sup> It is not certainly a pure specimen of the class. But even regarding this mixed type, the Sūtradhāra laments : *adhūnd virulab khalu miśra-bhāṣya-praśnab*.

<sup>2</sup> See L. D. Barnett in *JAS*, 1907, p. 729.

<sup>3</sup> Four other Bhāṣas have been published, but I have not seen them : (1) *Mahiṣa-maṅgala* by Pūrvanam Mahiṣamāṅgala Kavi, ed. Palghat 1890; (2) *Pañcabhāṣa-vijaya* by Raṅgacārya, Madras 1886. (3) *Rasika-rasijana* by Srinivāśacārya, Mysore 1885. (4) *Śrīgāra-sudhārṣya* by Rāmavarman, Yuvarāja. For a bibliography of unpublished Bhāṣas, see Sten Komow, *Ind. Drama* § 121. Wilson, in his *Select Specimens*, gives an analysis of a Bhāṣa called *Sāraṇā-tilaka* (referred to here as *Sdt*) by Śaṅkara. No trace has yet been found of the *Śrīgāra-maṅjari* and the *Līlā-madhukara* mentioned respectively by Singabhūpāla and Viśvanātha. [Since writing this, I have been able to obtain a copy of *Pañcabhāṣa-vijaya* published from Madras (1915) by V. Ramaswamy Sastralu in Telugu character].

Bhāṇa as typified in these works may not be unfittingly described as the narrative of a Rake's Progress, giving us the account of a perfect day of adventure of the chief Viṭa, who is "the hero". His name is either Vilāśaśekhara (*Śbh*), Anāṅgaśekhara (*Śs*), Bhujāṅgaśekhara (*Śt*), Śrīṅgāraśekhara (*Vi*), or simply (but rarely) the Viṭa (*Rs*). Curiously enough, the *Prastāvanā* is not a monologue, as one would expect in a monologue-play, but usually takes the form of a dialogue between the Sūtradhāra and his Pāripārśvaka, or between the Sūtradhāra and the Naṭī. The Viṭa-hero, whose approach is indicated at the end of the Prologue, enters the stage in a love-lorn condition, and begins a somewhat elaborate description of the early morning in terms of erotic imagery. Then he tells us what brings him out so early; it is usually his vexation at being separated from his beloved, who is generally a hetaera but sometimes an intriguing married woman, by the force of circumstances; but sometimes his object is (as in *Śbh*) to pay a friendly visit or (as in *Rs*) to keep his promise of looking after his friend's loved one. He makes a promenade through the street of the hetaera (*veṭa-vāṭa*), which is described elaborately, and carries on a series of imaginary conversation with friends, both male and female, who frequent such a place, speaking in the air to persons out of sight and repeating answers which he pretends to receive. He describes in this way the rather shady lives and amorous adventures of a large number of his acquaintances—rogues, courtesans, and men-about-town—and describes ram-fights, cock-fights, snake-charming, wrestling, gambling with dice, magic shows, acrobatic feats, selling of bracelets, besides various kinds of fashionable, if feminine, sports<sup>1</sup>. He settles disputes between a hetaera (or her lover) and her old grasping mother; between a hetaera and her unfaithful lover, incidentally describing the *kalatra-pāṭrikā*<sup>2</sup> or the document setting forth the terms of contract of a temporary union. He listens to

<sup>1</sup> Such as *kanḍuka-kriḍā* *dolā-rihāra*, *cakṣur-apidhāna*, *ambara-karayāḍaka* *mayi-guptaka*, *yugmāyugma-darśana*, *caturaṅga-rihāra*, *gajapati-kusuma-kanḍuka*, etc. These are, however, not mentioned by Vātsyāyana.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, *Śbh* p. 15, *Śs* p. 18. Besides money, the man stipulates to provide for his mistress a pair of clothes every month, as well as flower, wreaths, musk, camphored betels every day.

music played on the *vīṇā* and sometimes enters a dancing salon, exchanging pleasantries with dancing girls. He succeeds in the end in achieving the object with which he set forth, executes the entrusted commission or meets his beloved, and concludes with a description of the evening and moon-rise—the end of a perfect day! The scene of action is usually laid in some famous South Indian town like Kāñcī or, as in *Sdt*, in some imaginary land of romantic fancy like Kolāhalapura “the city of noise”; and the normal occasion of its performance is some festival in honour of a local deity.

Some amount of satire is incidentally introduced in the description, e.g. of the licentious Paurāṇika, the old Śrotriya, the fraudulent astrologer, and (but this rarely) the Jaṅgamas, Saivas, and Vaiṣṇavas<sup>1</sup>. In Vatsarāja's *Hāsyā-cūḍāmaṇī*, if not in his *Kc*, the Bhāgavatas are ridiculed, and a great deal of pungent satire is directed against the Gurjara people in *Mk*; but this is not a common feature. Indeed, satire or real “low comedy” is very slight in later Bhāṇas, the erotic element universally predominating. The characters are not diversified enough, but consist of the usual specimens of the man about town and the courtesan; and even then they are types rather than individuals, repeating themselves in all the Bhāṇas. The descriptions, though sometimes poetic, are overladen with erotic suggestions and imageries, and the incidents and adventures are often of the same stamp, even sometimes hopelessly coarse. It is remarkable that everything in these Bhāṇas tends to the erotic, and that hardly any other source of interest is allowed.

Indeed, one of the outstanding features of all these Bhāṇas is their want of variety; and the monotonous insistence on the erotic sentiment tends to become cloying. This, combined with their hopeless but vigorous vulgarity, must have been responsible to some extent for the comparative oblivion to which they had been consigned. There is no doubt that in later times they became mere literary exercises and subsided into a conventional and lifeless form of art. There is a monotonous sameness of style and treatment, inevitably suggesting a sense of artificiality. We meet over and over again

<sup>1</sup> As in *Sdt*.

the same theme, the same types of characters, the same elaborate descriptions, the same tricks of expression, the same strings of nouns and adjectives, the same set of situations, the same group of conceits, and the same system of morals or want of morals. The depressing atmosphere of "low" characters, none of whom rise above the middle class, is bound to be dull unless diversified by comic effects or individual traits or variety of incidents and situations. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *Bhāṇa* as literature, though always popular, never made a permanent appeal and was forgotten in later times.

The *Karpūra-carita*, however, is notable because it presents certain remarkable features which differentiate it, in form and content, from the group of later South Indian *Bhāṇas*. In the first place, consistently with the character of the play itself, the *Prastāvanā* is in the form of a monologue by the *Sūtradhāra* (a trait which it possesses in common with the *Caturbhāṇī*), and use is made in the prologue of the *ākāśabhāṣita* (a trait which is absent in the *Caturbhāṇī*, as well as in the later *Bhāṇas*). In the second place, it is perhaps the only *Bhāṇa* which allows free use of Prakrit in the conversation, although an occasional infusion of Prakrit is noticeable in *Mk*, both in the *gāthā-songs* (as in some later *Bhāṇas*) and in the case of a limited number of imaginary feminine interlocutors. The plot is also somewhat different from the stereotyped plots of the above *Bhāṇas*. The *Vīṭa* does not walk through the colony of courtesans, but simply comes on the stage and engages in a conversation with an imaginary friend to whom he recounts his adventures. Revelry, gambling and love, no doubt, form the chief topic of recital, but enough comic relief is brought in to make it interesting. It would appear from these and other considerations that this *Bhāṇa* bears more affinities to the *Caturbhāṇī* than to the later *Bhāṇas*, although it possesses some individual peculiarities of its own.

The *Caturbhāṇī*, on the other hand, presents more variety, greater simplicity, a larger amount of social satire and comic relief, a more convincing power of drawing individuals rather than types, easier and more colloquial style, and some measure of real poetry in spite of certain coarseness. Although keeping generally to the same form and structure, they yet seem to constitute, in their style, treatment, and general atmosphere,

a class by themselves which can be distinguished easily from the group of later specimens already discussed.

The first point that strikes one is that the *Sthāpanā* or prologue is much shorter and, consistently with the one rôle character of the play itself, is presented by the *Sūtradhāra* alone (though he does not make use of *ākāśa-bhāṣita*, which we find only in the *Karpūra-carita*) with a few benedictory or introductory verses. Except in *Pt*, neither the author's name nor the occasion of its performance is mentioned. The prologue of the first *Bhāṇa* consists only of five verses on the god of love and spring-time; in the second, there is no benedictory verse at all, but the *Sūtradhāra* enters and sings a song on the rainy season for the entertainment of the audience; in the third, the *Sūtradhāra*, after reciting a verse in honour and praise of good ladies, announces in one verse the distracted appearance and approach of the *Viṭa*, to whom he leaves the stage and retires; the prologue of the last play alone, though still brief (seven verses and two short prose-passages), introduces us to the name of the *Bhāṇa* and of its author.

The *Viṭa* is not (except in *Dvs*) exactly the "hero", but the friend and emissary of the hero who never appears on the stage, which is filled entirely by the *Viṭa* as the sole actor. In *Pp* his name is given as *Śāśa*, but usually he is designated simply as *Viṭa*. The plays do not open with the conventional description of morning-time; but we have in *Pp* a brief description in one or two verses of early spring, in *Dvs* of the rainy season, in *Ubh* of the fully advanced spring-time; and there is no opening description at all in *Pt*, where the *Viṭa* plunges at once into the narrative.<sup>1</sup> The plot does not consist of the conventional reunion with the beloved, but considerable variety is introduced. In *Padma-prābhṛtyaka*, *Karṇīputra Mūladeva*, in love with *Devasenā*, sister to his beloved hetaera *Devadattā*, commissions his friend the *Viṭa* to ascertain the state of *Devasenā*'s mind. He walks through the streets of *Ujjayinī*, exchanging words with various kinds of amusing people, and taking an interest in their affairs, discharges his commission successfully, and returns with a gift of lotus-flower

<sup>1</sup> So in *Kc* and *Mk*; but in the latter *Bhāṇa* the hero enters into an elaborate mawkish account of the wretched state of his mind at an unforeseen separation from his beloved.

as a souvenir from Devasenā, from which the play takes its name. In *Dhūrta-viṭa-samvāda*, the clever and experienced Viṭa, finding the rainy season too depressing, comes out to spend the day in some amusement. He cannot afford dice and drinking—even his clothes have been reduced to one garment—so he wends his way towards the hetaera's street, meeting various kinds of people and ultimately reaching the house of the roguish couple Viśvalaka and Sunandā, where he passes the day in discussing certain knotty problems of Erotics put to him by Viśvalaka. The title "Dialogue between a Rogue and a Rake", therefore, appropriately describes its content. In *Ubbayābhīṣikā* the Viṭa is commissioned by his friend Kuberadatta to propitiate his offended lady, Nārāyaṇadattā; but when, after the usual series of wayside adventures, he reaches the house of the latter, he finds that the lovers, urged by the witchery of the season, had already set out in search of each other and forestalled him in effecting a reunion. In *Pāda-tāḍītaka*, the theme is more interesting and novel, if less edifying. The Viṭa sets out to attend an assembly of Viṭas and rakes, who have met to consider the question of expiation (*prāyaścitta*) referred to them by Taṇḍikoki Viṣṇunāga, the nominal "hero", the son of a Mahāmāitra and himself an officer of the king, for the indignity he has suffered by allowing an intoxicated courtesan, a Saurāṣṭra girl, named Madanāsenikā, to kick him, in playfulness, on such a sacred spot of his body as his head.

It is proper to remark that the scene of action in all these plays is laid not in Southern India, but they favour Northern India, preferring imperial cities like Ujjayinī or Kasumapura (*Pāṭaliputra*)<sup>1</sup>; and in one case the author probably wanted to disguise the name of the actual city, whose scandals are recorded by the calling it Sārvabhuama-nagara, an imaginary cosmopolitan city somewhere in Western India. Of course, the Viṭa takes his usual promenade in the hetaera's street and carries on imaginary conversations, but the characters are

<sup>1</sup> The brilliant description of Pāṭaliputra in *Ubb*, F.W. Thomas thinks, is a clue to the date of this *Bhāṣā*, as that city was in a state of decay since the seventh century A.D. But this, of course, is not conclusive, as such descriptions could have been conventional. The description here, however, appears too vivid to be merely conventional.

not the usual types of the rake and the courtesan, but are sufficiently diversified to keep up the interest of the narrative; and a zest is added, in spite of the erotic theme, by a decided leaning towards satirical or comic portraiture. F. W. Thomas has already called attention to the character and nomenclature of the numerous personages and the references to classes and peoples in *Pāda-lāqitaka*; we may here briefly consider the other Bhāṇas from the same point of view.

In the course of the narrative in *Pp* we become acquainted with :—

Sārasvatabhadra of Kātyāyana gotra, son of Śāradvatī, a sky-gazing poet, sitting on the doorstep, possessed by the spirit of poetry.

Dardaraka, a Piṭhamarda.<sup>1</sup>

A friend of Vipulā, who has been forsaken by Mūladeva for Devadattā. He is described as the lover of Kāmadattā; but his name is not given.<sup>2</sup>

Dattakalaśi, son of Dandasūka, a Pāṇinian grammarian, always at war with the Kātantrikas, full of pedantry and given to debauchery and quarrelling.

Pavitraka, son of Dharmāsanika<sup>3</sup>, pretending great purity but given to profligacy, prudish and hypocritical.

Mṛḍaṅgavāsulaka, an old actor aping youth, who takes the rôle of Viṭa in a play and is called "Bhāva Jaradgava" by courtesans.

Saiśilaka, coming out of a gambling house, a profligate young Brahmin rake who has taken by force a Śākyā-bhikṣukī.

<sup>1</sup> The Piṭhamarda as a character, though prescribed by theorists, is not much favoured by classical dramatists, and the term is unknown to them, although Bhavabhūti's Makaranda may be taken as the type. But the Piṭhamarda here is an Upāṅgaraka and assistant in love-affairs, such as described by Vātsyāyana i. 4. 44 : 5. 37.

<sup>2</sup> The editors think that the phrase *kāmadattā-prākṛta-kārya-pratiṣṭhāna-bhāṭa*, here used, alludes to a Prakarana, named Kāmadattā, in ten acts. But the allusion, if any, is rather to a Prakrit Kāvya. One Kāmadattā is cited by Viśvanātha as an instance of the *bhāṣyikā* variety of Upāṅgas. This *bhāṣyikā* is also cited in *Nāṭaka-ratna-kōpa* (Lévi in *J.A.*, cciii, Octobre-Décembre, 1923, p. 213), where a *Saṅkīlāmadattā-prakarana* (the same, probably, as the editors think of) is also mentioned (p. 215).

<sup>3</sup> Is this a proper name or a title?

Samdhilaka, a debauched Śākyā-bhikṣu, who pretends that he has come to console the hetaera Saṅgha-dāsikā (who has recently lost her mother) with the words of the Buddha<sup>1</sup>.

Vanarājikā, daughter of Vasantavatī, coming out of the temple of Kāmadeva (god of love).

Irīma and Tāmbūlasenā, engaged in amorous sports.

Kumudvatī, daughter of Bhāṇḍīrasenā, in love with the Maurya Prince, Candrodaya, who is away fighting with rebellious Sāmantas (described as *prośitapatikā*).

Priyānguyaṣṭikā, daughter of Pāñcāladāsī, playing with *kanduka* (ball).

Śoṇadāsī, daughter of Nāgarikā, in a miserable mood, singing a pathetic love-song and pining for Candradhara, with whom she has quarrelled (described as *kalahāntaritā*). The song is in the *kaiśīka*-style, which is described as synonymous with weeping (*kaiśīkāśrayam hi gānam paryāyaśabdo ruditasya*).

Magadhasundarī, daughter of Nāgarikā, described as a *vāsakasajjā nāyikā*, singing a *catuṣpadā*, called "vallabhā".

Darduraka, son of an actress, pupil of the *nātyācārya* Gandharvadatta.

Priyavādanikā, maid to Devasenā.

Devasenā, sister to Devadattā, in love with Mūladeva, the "hero", who is described as a native of Pāṭaliputra, but a man of some importance in Ujjayinī.

The personages in *Dv*s are much fewer :—

Śreṣṭhiputra Kṛṣṇilaka a reckless young blood whose "misbegotten" (*dāsyāḥ putrah*) father is an obstacle in the way of his enjoyment of wine, women and gambling, and who feels that he could take an axe like Paraśurāma and clear the world of fathers.<sup>2</sup>

Vārunikā, maid to Madanasenā.

Bandhumatikā, sitting at her doorstep with Caturikā and putting her girdle (*mekhalā*) in place.

<sup>1</sup> The interview with the Śākyā-bhikṣu is quoted by F. W. Thomas (*Cent. Suppl.*, pp. 129-30).

<sup>2</sup> The conversation with this young rake has been given by F. W. Thomas as a specimen of the style (*Cent. Suppl.*, pp. 126-7).

Rāinadāśī, described as a *khaṇḍitā nāyikā*.

Ratisenā, just waking up after a drunken revelry.

Pradyumnañadāśī, coming out of Rāmilaka's house.

Viśvalaka and Sunandā, the door of whose house is always shut for fear of wandering guests. The former is described as a penniless *nagna-śramaṇaka* who, fond of courtesans but now impotent through disease, cannot give up Sunandā, like a crow never leaving the outskirts of a village, while the latter, like a dried up river, no longer young or sought after, follows Viśvalaka.

In *Ubh* we meet with :—

Anāṅgadattā, daughter of Viśnudattā, forced by her avaricious mother to the arms of Samudradatta, son of the merchant Dhanadatta, one of "the new rich" (*adyatana-kāla-vaiśravana*).

Vilāsakaunḍinī, a Buddhist Parivrājikā of questionable morals, quoting Vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya philosophy.

Rāmasenā, mother of Cāraṇadāśī. Though old, she simulates youth, and is going to fetch her daughter from the house of Dhanika, a poor and therefore undesirable lover, on the pretence of giving her music lessons.

Sukumārikā, a veteran hetaera, feared and avoided by all, offended with Rāmasena, the Rāja-śyāla, for his unfaithfulness to her.

Dhanamitra, son of the merchant Pārthaka, deceived and robbed by Ratisenā.

Priyaṅgusenā, a dancing girl, who has laid a wager with Devadattā on the enacting of a musical play (*sāṅgītaka*), entitled *Purandara-vijaya*, in the house of the prince of Kusumapura. She is described as an expert in the four kinds of Abhinaya (acting)<sup>1</sup>, thirty-two varieties of manual gestures (*hasta-pracāra*), eighteen ways of glancing (*nirīkṣāṇa*), six musical tones (*sthāna*), three kinds of motion (*gati*), eight *rasas* or dramatic sentiments, and three kinds of *laya* in song and music.

Kanakalatā, a ceṭī to Nārāyaṇadattā, the heroine.

Viśvāvasudatta, a Vīṇācārya.

<sup>1</sup> Viz. vocal (*sācikā*), gestural (*dhāgikā*), extraneous (*āhārya*) and internal (*sāttvika*), conveyed respectively by words, gestures, external dress or decoration, and manifestation of internal feelings.

Perhaps the largest number of persons of an astonishing variety for Sanskrit classical drama—persons of that heterogeneous type which we find in *Mṛcchakatīka*—occurs in *Pādatāḍītaka*, the last Bhāṇa in the collection, of which a fairly full list has already been given by F. W. Thomas. In later Bhāṇas foreigners are hardly mentioned; and even of countries and peoples of India by far the largest enumeration occurs *Pt*, which names in one passage Cola, Kerala, Nepāla, Mālava, Magadha, Kaliṅga, and Karmāṭaka. In *Pt*, on the other hand, the peoples enumerated as inhabiting the imperial city are the Śakas, Yavanas, Tuṣāras, Pārasikas, Magadhas, Kirātas, Kaliṅgas, Vaṅgas, Kāśas, Māhiṣakas, Colas, Pāṇḍyas, and Keralas; and mention is also made of Yaudheyas, Rohitakas, Bāhlīkas<sup>1</sup>, Koṇkaṇas (or Aparāntas), Lāṭas, Śaurpārikas, Sinhalcse, Hūṇas, Ābhīras, Gargas, Niṣādas, Āvantikas, Sauvīras, Dāserakas, Kāmbojas, Barbaras, Kārūṣa-Maladas, as well as peoples of Vidiarbha, Kāśī, Kosala, Surāṣṭra, and Gandhāra.

The whole trend of this Bhāṇa—the author himself condemns humbug and sham at the outset—is remarkably satirical; and the satiric possibilities of incorrigible rakes, filthy rogues, fashionable idlers, and heartless hetaerae, who jostle with each other within its small compass, are utilized with a great deal of wit and no small power of observation and caricature. The author vents his spiteful wit all around, especially on foreigners, but directs it chiefly against the Lāṭas and the Dāserakas, as also in a smaller degree on the Saurāṣṭras and Mālavas. It is quite possible, as F. W. Thomas suggests, that the application of a fictitious name Sārvabhauma-nagara, instead of Ujjayinī or Pāṭaliputra, to the imperial city was meant to prevent identification with an actual capital, whose scandalous gossip the poet sought to record in a disguised form; and the name itself is made suggestive of the fact that one must imagine a cosmopolitan city where the scum and refuse of all countries and nationalities meet.

It is certainly significant that the types of peoples and

<sup>1</sup> Mahāpratīhāra Bhadrāyudha is described as the lord of the northern Bāhlīkas as well as of the Kārūṣa-Maladas: a fact which would seem to indicate a somewhat curious location of these two peoples as adjacent to each other.

personages described or ridiculed in all these four Bhāṇas are such as are unknown to later writers of Bhāṇa. Characters like Sārasvatabhadra, the sky-gazing poet with a verse on the spring recorded on the wall, Dattakalasi the pedantic Pāṇinian with his sesquipedalian affectation and war on the Kātantrikas, Samdhilaka the wicked Śākyā-bhikṣu, Mṛdaṅgavāsulaka the decrepit *nāṭaka-viṭa* nicknamed "Bhāva Jaradgava", the thoughtless young rake Śreṣṭhi-putra Kṛṣṇilaka averse to marriage, the rogiush old couple Viśvalaka and Sunandā, Vilāsakaunḍinī the hypocritical Buddhist Parivrājikā of easy virtue who always quotes the scriptures—to mention only a few—are specimens which are unknown to later Bhāṇa-writers. The name of the characters themselves are somewhat quaint and unfamiliar to later drama. What is more remarkable is that they are not merely types, but distinct individuals. The Śākyā Bhikṣu and Bhikṣukī, who figure also in *Bhagavat-ajjutkīya*<sup>1</sup> and *Matta-vilāsa*, disappear from later Prahasana and Bhāṇa, and their place is taken, but only rarely, by absurd Śrotriyas<sup>2</sup>, wicked Paurāṇikas (*śs* and *Mk*), Saivas<sup>3</sup> and Vaiśnavas (*sd*) or Bhāgavatas.<sup>4</sup> The animus with which the Buddhists are attacked points to a time when such religious animosity was still alive and when later religious sects had not become so prominent as to be made objects of satire.

It would be difficult, indeed, to find in the group of later Bhāṇas (even including *Kc* and *Mk*) works like *Des* and *Pt.* which stand unique for their marvellous records of the shady lives and adventures, scandals and gossips, of a class of people who infest all imperial cities, and which would not be unworthy of the pen of the author of *Mṛcchakaṭīka*. The modes of expiation proposed for Viṣṇunāga, the hero of the latter Bhāṇa, whose dignity has been touched by the insulting behaviour of

<sup>1</sup> Text published in *JBOBN*, vol. x, pts. i and ii, 1924, pp. 70 f. In *Lafakamelaka* (first half of the twelfth century) there is a Digambara, but he is probably a Jains.

<sup>2</sup> The Viṭa in *Des* swears that, if what he says is not correct, he would turn a Śrotriya; and later on he declares that he would rather live with Śrotriyas than with impossible Apsarasas of the Śāstrakāra's heaven. He also alludes with repugnance to the smelly, rough and corneous feet of the Śrotriyas, touched and worshipped by men.

<sup>3</sup> The *Matta-vilāsa* figures Pāśupatas and Kapāliins.

<sup>4</sup> As in Vatsarāja's *Hōṣya-cūḍāmaṇi*.

Madanasenikā, are indeed amusing and indicate a natural gift of polite banter. Some think that it is not Viṣṇunāga, but the girl herself who should expiate for setting her foot upon such a beast ; others suggest that Viṣṇunāga should rub and shampoo her dishonoured feet. Another proposes that he should bathe his head with the water with which she washes her feet, and drink the same ; while the poet Rudravarman prescribes that his dishonoured head should be shorn. But in the end, it is agreed, on the proposal of the presiding rake, that Madanasenikā should put more sense into her lover by setting her foot on the president's own head in the sight of Viṣṇunāga. The former of the Bhāṇas, again, gives us an amusing epitome of the aesthetic and moral laws which govern the life of a rake and forms a companion volume to works like *Kuṭjani-mata*.<sup>1</sup> Some of the interesting topics discussed are : "If money alone attracts a courtesan, why do theorists classify them as *uttamā*, *madhyamā*, and *adhamā* ?" "What are the signs of love in hetaera ?" "Why is it that the first union is not always pleasant ?" "How to propitiate an offended woman ?" and so forth. The reply to the last of these questions will illustrate the mode of discussion. The Viṭa admits at the outset that it is a difficult question, for the anger of a woman is, like remittent fever, hard to doctor, but goes to discuss various remedies that have been proposed. He rejects *pāda-patana* (falling at the feet) as no remedy ; for what humiliation is there in falling at the feet, tender as a twig, of a lovely woman, when one does fall at the smelly feet of an old priest, rough with corns and looking like a hard and contracted old crab. Those who say that swearing is a remedy forget that even respectable women, not to speak of courtesans, do not put any faith in the swearing of a rake. Of course, it does help a little if by words and gestures you can make her laugh, for this is, no doubt, a means to sound the depth of her anger ; but the Viṭa himself would argue, from actual experience, that kissing is the most effective way of appeasing an angry woman. It is also characteristic that the Viṭa should combat with some heat the injunction of some Śāstrakāras that one should avoid the company of woman. He ends with an eloquent discourse on the joys of a rake's life,

<sup>1</sup> It is curious that Hemacandra (Comm., p. 239) mentions these works together.

which cannot be compared to the traditional delights of the Śāstrakāra's heaven. But the Viṭa, in spite of his questionable habits, is not devoid of all sense of honour—there is honour among rakes—and insists that nothing is more heinous than ingratitude, himself always assiduous in the service of his friends.

Indeed, the Viṭa is not altogether a despicable character, and is not such a coward and worthless amorist as the later Bhāṇas depict him. A sharp and rake as he is, he is still a man of wit, polish, and some culture—a perfect man of the world; and the serious way in which he discusses delicate problems in the doctrine of love shows not only his profound acquaintance with the gay science, but also his extensive experience *au fond* of the ways of the hetaera. The Vaiśikī Kalā or Vaiśika Upacāra, as this art is called, is elaborated by writers on Kāma-śāstra, and touched upon by Bharata in ch. xxiii; but something more than mere study of such works was necessary, viz. its practical application involving a deep knowledge of human, especially feminine, nature. The Viṭa as a character is neglected in the serious drama; but he appears in Cārudatta and attains considerable development in *Mycchakajika*. In the Bhāṇa he is in all his glory. Bharata lays down that the Bhāṇa should be *dhūrla-viṭa-saṃprayojya*; he need not be the "hero", as he is not in most of these early Bhāṇas. But as he is the only character who fills the stage, the "heroship" is very naturally transferred to him in later Bhāṇas. He is still figured as a poet skilled in the arts, especially in music and erotics; but he is not, as we have already remarked, of very heroic proportion. He appears essentially as an erotic character in conformity with the predominantly erotic nature of later Bhāṇas, a gallant in the worst sense and nothing more, casting his favours right and left, and boasting of a hundred conquests in the hetaera-world, a cowardly, mean, fickle man about town—a poor shadow of his former self!

It has been remarked more than once before that it is very striking indeed that the satiric and comic tendency, which should be rightly emphasized in a Bhāṇa from its close relationship with the Prahasana and its association with "low" characters, is so prominent in the *Caturbhāṇī*, but disappears gradually in later Bhāṇas, which become in course of time entirely erotic.

No doubt, the erotic tendency, in spite of the silence of Bharata and his commentator, was an inseparable feature of the Bhāṇa from the earliest time, and the figure of the Viṭa as the principal actor naturally kept up and fostered it. But what is significant is that the erotic suggestion gets the upper hand in later Bhāṇas, which do not make the best of the comic possibilities of the society which they handle and which lends itself readily to such treatment. The very names of later Bhāṇas, such as Śringāra-bhūṣana, Śringāra-tilaka, Śringāra-sarvasva, Śringāra-mañjari, Pañcabāṇa-vijaya or Rasa-sadana, emphasize their exclusive tendency towards the erotic and their diminishing interest in comedy or satire. The conclusion is, therefore, not unlikely that the age of the *Caturbhāṇi* must be reckoned at a time when the author of the Bhāṇa had greater freedom of handling and could draw upon other legitimate sources of interest than the erotic. We have seen that Bharata gives us no prescription regarding the Rasa to be delineated in the Bhāṇa, and therefore left the earlier authors unfettered in this respect. But from Dhanañjaya's time it is distinctly understood that the erotic and the heroic should be the Rasas proper to a Bhāṇa. The heroic was probably dropped as unsuitable to the essential character of the play itself, but the erotic came to prevail. Viśvanātha's exception that the Kaisikī Vṛtti may sometimes be allowed is quite in keeping with the erotic spirit of later writings, as this dramatic style gave a greater scope to love and gallantry. These considerations suggest for the *Caturbhāṇi* a date much earlier than that of Dhanañjaya, in whose time the erotic convention appears to have been firmly established.

This suggestion receives support from another, if apparently minor, consideration. Dhanañjaya and other later theorists insist that the narrative (*vastu*) should be invented by the poet (*kalpitā*), i.e. it should not be based on actual (i.e. contemporary) or historical or legendary incidents; an injunction which is wanting in Bharata, in whose time perhaps such a hard and fast rule did not obtain. The authors of the *Caturbhāṇi* cannot be said to have followed or known Dhanañjaya's prescription regarding the nature of the plot. One can never affirm that society such as depicted in *Dus* or *Pl* is entirely imaginary and does not possess a basis of actuality. The learned editors of these Bhāṇas have actually noted, in the case of

the first Bhāṇa, *Pp*, that it is probably based on some current version of the legend of Mūladeva Kārnīśuta, which is alluded to by Bāṇa, and which goes back to the *Bṛhat-kathā*, Kārnīśuta being regarded traditionally as the author of a manual on the art of theft<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, the impression that one gets from these Bhāṇas is that the chief object of their authors is to caricature and satirize certain aspects of contemporary society and present to us a fairly faithful picture of a certain class of men and women in an interesting period. In the later Bhāṇas, on the other hand, the narrative, keeping strictly to the later rigid Ālāṁkārika prescription, is entirely imaginary; the picture is somewhat factitious, and the characters are rather types than individuals of real flesh and blood. One would seek in vain in these decadent writings for the power of observation and reproduction of real life which is so vividly exhibited by the authors of the *Caturbhāṇī*. The later Bhāṇas are in a narrow sense artistic productions, imitative and reproductive of earlier works, or entirely invented, and give us a sense of that artificiality which is inseparable from all laboured composition. There is less exuberance of life, the descriptions are more elaborate, and the style and treatment lack ease and naturalness, although they might have gained in elegance and gracefulness.

One can never deny that the Bhāṇas, without exception, are hopelessly coarse; but a distinction can be made between what may be called the conventional indecency of later Bhāṇas and the strong and honest plain-speaking or broad jesting, even if resulting in coarseness of ideas and expression, which marks the *Caturbhāṇī*. It is more than useless to read austere morals into these old-time playwrights or damn them for want of morals; but the polished and factitious indecency of later Bhāṇas (all the more deplorable) stands in vivid contrast to the easy and genuine, if gross, ideas and expression of the *Caturbhāṇī*, which cannot but appeal to the robust and keen appre-

<sup>1</sup> My colleague, Dr. R. G. Basak, draws my attention to the story of Mūladeva and Devadaitī, given in Jacobi's *Ausgewählte Erzählungen in Māhārāṣṭri*, no. viii, pp. 56 f., where Mūladeva appears as a prince who is an expert in the art of detecting thieves. The reference by Bāṇa will be found in *Kādambarī* (ed. Peterson, 1900, p. 19, ll. 16-17), where punning allusion is also made to Saśa and Vipulā of the story.

ciation of a man who is untouched by the comfortable and self-righteous attitude of the bourgeoisie or the refined gentlemanliness of the aristocrat. The coarseness of later Bhāṇas consists chiefly in the erotic stanzas and the description of erotic situations, which are composed, more or less, in accordance with an established literary convention, and which, more than anything else, are the ready means of displaying a full knowledge of the Kāma-śāstra. This convention was, no doubt, very old, obtaining from the time of the earlier classical poets, but what the polished court-poets lacked sometimes was the frank expression of physical affection in its exceedingly human aspect. Coarseness or vulgarity, no doubt, is a thing not desirable in higher forms of art; the theorists condemn it, but strangely enough they allow what is called here conventional or artistic indecency. There is always a distinction between natural vulgarity and artistic indecency. What is naturally gross or grotesque may not be pleasant, but it is nearer life in its primal sensations and in its terrible sincerity; it is not smoothed over with finer workmanship which tends to make its latent suggestions all the more vivid. The earlier Bhāṇa, though lacking this finer workmanship, is marked by a *bonhomie* which indicates a naïve exuberance, a sense of enjoyment of the good things of life which we cannot expect in the cultivated writers of a more sophisticated age. It is, therefore, not unamusing to find, as a sign of simplicity, people discussing physical facts of life with such entire frankness as they do in these earlier Bhāṇas. A comic but vulgar imagery like (*Pt* p. 12) :

cumbana-raktam̄ so'syā daśanam̄ cyuta-mūlam̄ ātimano  
vadane ||

jihvā-mūla-spr̄ṣṭam̄ khād iti kṛtvā niraṣṭhīvat ||

would be eschewed with horror or treated as an instance of the Bībhatsa Rasa<sup>1</sup> by the later and more elegant writers; but things like these are given with perfect naïveté by the authors

<sup>1</sup> Kṣemendra, who quotes this verse as an instance of Anaucitya in the depiction of Rasa, remarks : *atra hāsyā-rasasya bībhatsa-rasāśhīrāsitasya* *lakṣmaṇi-piṭasya* *ru* *kuzuma-śr̄khārasyātī-jugupūṣitatrād* *anipūtasya* *param-*  
*ānauceityena* *ramakūras* *tirohitāḥ*. *ṛyddhī-paricumbane* *jivvā-mūla-prāptas-*  
*ya* *cyuta-dasānasya* *kāṣṭha-loṭināḥ* *śūḥīramena* *bībhatsasyairā* *prādhānyam̄*,  
*na tu hāsyā-rasasya* (*Anaucitya-ricīra*, ed. Kāvyamālā, p. 126).

of the *Caturbhāṇī* who are easily tolerant of such colloquial liberties, often lapsing into vulgarity.

It is proper to note in this connexion that these authors are not indeed ignorant of the Kāma-sāstra; for while two Sūtras from Dattaka<sup>1</sup>, a predecessor of Vātsyāyana, are actually given in two Bhāṇas, Śāśa in the third Bhāṇa laughingly alludes to Dattaka's use of the sacred *om* at the outset of his unvedic Sūtras. It is significant, however, that Vātsyāyana, who is quoted frequently in later Bhāṇas (e.g. *Śs* p. 37), is never alluded to in the *Caturbhāṇī*. While a knowledge of the Kāma-sāstra and conformity to its regulations cannot be denied to the authors of the *Caturbhāṇī*, it was not to them a lifeless science which can be exploited for the purpose of composing erotic verses and describing erotic situations.

An attempt has been made in the above exposition to establish that the *Caturbhāṇī* form a group by themselves, between which and the later Bhāṇas, the earliest of which is certainly not earlier than the thirteenth century, a considerable time must have elapsed. In spite of the fact that the *Mk* calls itself a *miśra bhāṇa*, this work, as well as *Kc*, stands midway as it were between these two groups, and illustrates the characteristics of a period of transition from the one to the other, if such a period of transition can be allowed. The lower limit of the date of Śyāmilaka's *Pt* is obtained, as the editors have already noted, by the reference of Abhinavagupta, Kuntaka, and Kṣemendra, all of whom belong to the end of the tenth century<sup>2</sup>, a fact which is confirmed by the general inference drawn above that these Bhāṇas should be placed much earlier than the stan-

<sup>1</sup> *Drs* p. 24; *Pt* p. 28. Mention is made of *triphalā*, *gokṣura* and *lohanūrpa* as aphrodisiac in *Pp* p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Our Śyāmilaka is the same as Kṣemendra's Śyāmala, as the two verses quoted by Kṣemendra (*Aurit. ric. ad* # 16; *Sucyutta-til. ad* ii, 31) are to be found in our Bhāṇa as # 33 and 126. The verse ascribed to Śyāmalaka in *Suhṛśpitārali* 2292 undoubtedly refers to our Bhāṇa, the second line of the verse occurring in a slightly modified form in it. The editors are probably right in distinguishing him from Śyāmala, who was Mahimabhaṭṭa's Guru. F. W. Thomas makes a slip when he speaks of Mahimabhaṭṭa himself and not his teacher as the son of Dhairyā. See S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, vol. i, p. 154 f. n. These citations by Kashiniran authors make it probable that Śyāmilaka, Śyāmalaka or Śyāmala, was a "northerner" (*udīcyā*), as the colophon says.

dard dramaturgic work of Dhanañjaya, and which disposes entirely of the rather uninformed opinion of A. B. Keith that none of these Bhāṇas need go beyond 1000 A. D. The lower limits of the date of *Pp* and *Dv*s are given by Hemacandra's quotation and reference in his *Kātyānuśāsana*, but the lower limit of the date of *Ubh* is not known<sup>1</sup>. It is, however, not unlikely, on the grounds set forth above, that the lower limit obtained for *Pt* should be taken as the lower limit of the date of all these Bhāṇas, which exhibit similar characteristics.

But one important point made out by F. W. Thomas with regard to *Pt*, which applies to all these Bhāṇas, is that there is nowhere any suspicion of Muhammadans. In the case of *Pt* it is also strange, as the same scholar points out, that "in a scene favouring Western India Gurjaras are not mentioned", although the Lāṭas figure so prominently. In one of the later Bhāṇas (*Mk*) Gurjara men and women are spitefully described (pp. 28-5), while the Lāṭas disappear entirely from these late plays. The contempt poured upon the Guptas in *Pt*, to which one may add the mention of a Maurya prince in *Pp*, may or may not be an important point; but there can be no doubt that the types of peoples and personages described or ridiculed in all these four Bhāṇas are not the same types as are known to later writers of Bhāṇa.

The lexicographical and stylistic peculiarities to which F. W. Thomas alludes also point to the same direction and suggest an early date. It is not possible for us to enter into this question within the limits of the present essay; but it may be pointed out that these peculiarities show greater affinity to the earlier classical drama (especially to *Mṛcchakaṭika*) than to its later imitation. Apart from the use of a large number of unfamiliar or obscure words and expressions (e.g. *kaurukucī* in the sense of "prudery" or "hypocrisy", *Pt* p. 2; *dhāntra* in the sense of "fellow"), one may, for instance, point out that the word *vāsū*, used here in addressing a young girl, is not known to later playwrights; but it is found in *Mṛcchakaṭika*. Atten-

<sup>1</sup> The fact that one verse from it is quoted by Taravācāspati does not help us much; for this commentator on Dāṇḍin quotes the *Datārāgīpaka* and *Bhoja*, and must therefore be a fairly late writer. I cannot, however, agree with F. W. Thomas in his opinion that this Bhāṇa does not depart from later types. My reasons are already given above.

tion may be drawn also to the honorific mode of addressing one in the third person as *devānām priyah*<sup>1</sup> (*Pp* p. 4, *Pt* p. 15); to the use of *ām* and *aṅgho* as interjections; to the allusion regarding the employment of *mydaṅga* or drum in the *Āṅka* of a drama (*Pp* p. 14, *Pt* p. 15); to grammatical irregularities like *kokilā gānti gītam* (*Pp* p. 1), and to many other little points of interest of the same nature, which space forbids us to deal with in detail. The language employed is Sanskrit throughout with the exception of two short Prakrit passages in *Pt* (pp. 21, 23); and its racy, well-turned, and conversational tone and character, very unlike that of the affected prose of *Kādambarī* and *Vāsavadattā*, is rightly characterized by F. W. Thomas as "the veritable ambrosia of Sanskrit speech".<sup>2</sup>

The général atmosphere of these plays, their style and treatment, their real literary quality, their natural humour and polite banter, the types of men and nations dealt with, are, however, points which, as we have already briefly discussed, are of great importance in determining the age, if not the exact

<sup>1</sup> The *Vārttika* on Pāṇini vi. 3. 22 says : *devānām priya ity ala ca pūṣṭhyo alaṅg raktaryāḥ*. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita adds *iti ca mārkha*, i.e. when the sense is that of a fool. There is no authority for this, either in the *Mahābhāṣya* or in the *Kāśīkā*. On the contrary, Patañjali on v. 3. 14 uses the phrase apparently in a good sense (*bharān dirghāyur devānām priya alaṅgāmān iti*). Bāṇa, in his *Harṣa-rarita* (ed. N. S. P., 1918, p. 25, l. 13), uses it in the honorific sense, on which Śaṅkara remarks : *devānām priya-alayeti pūjārācūnam*, and quotes the *Vārttika* *pūṣṭhyo alaṅg*. Mammāṭa (ed. Jhalakikara, 3rd ed., 1917, p. 226) appears to have been the earliest author to use the phrase in a deprecatory sense, where it is explained by the author of the "Pradīpa" as *pāṇi* or *mārkha*, the implication being that the sacrificial animals (*paśavāḥ*) are the favourites of gods. See S. P. Chaturvedi in *Proceedings of All-India Orient. Conf.*, viii (Mysore), 1937, pp. 739-44.

<sup>2</sup> The Viṭa in *Pp* ridicules the affected speech of the Pāṇinian and asks him to use conversational language, but this appears to hurt the dignity of the learned grammarian. The passage is worth quoting : *Prasīdatu bharān, mārkasya asmān evam-vidhaiḥ kōṣṭha-niṣṭhurair vāg-abanibhir abhikarantum. Sādhu ryaṇahārikayā vāda veda, abhājanam hi rayaṁ pāṭīḍānam karabhadrogāra-durīkhaṇādām śrotra-riṣa-niṣeka-bhāṭāṇām vāyikaraya-vāg-ryasāṇādām*. To which the grammarian replies : *Kathām akam idānīm aneka-vāvadākā-vādī ryaṇabha-righeftanopārījītām aneka-dhātukatagñānām cācasu utarjya stri-sariram ira mādhuburja-komaldām kari-ṣyāmi* ?

date, of these *Bhāṇas*. From such facts revealed by the text F. W. Thomas would suggest for *Pt* a date much earlier than the lower limit fixed by the reference of Abhinavagupta, and place it in the time of Harṣa of Kanauj or even that of the later Guptas, i.e. in the sixth and seventh centuries. It is highly probable that the other *Bhāṇas* in this collection also belong to the same age—the age of the earlier classical dramatists; and if this is so, the historian of the Sanskrit Drama need not regret any more the alleged failure of the classical drama to preserve some early specimens of this form of composition.

*JHAS*, January 1926

## BHĀGAVATISM AND SUN-WORSHIP

In his article on *The Nārāyaṇīya and the Bhāgavatas* published in the *Indian Antiquary*, September 1908, Grierson put forward a somewhat remarkable hypothesis (pp. 258-4) of the solar origin of Bhāgavatism. The view does not appear to have attracted much notice from scholars competent to pronounce an opinion on the subject; but it has neither been directly approved nor directly discredited. Since the theory has been repeated by Grierson in his article on *Bhakti-mārga* in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* ii, p. 540, where he practically reproduces his previous statements and arguments, a few remarks on the question may be offered.

Grierson very clearly states his position when he says: "We have no literary evidence as to the train of reasoning by which this doctrine (i.e. the monotheistic Bhakti-doctrine of the Bhāgavata religion) was reached, but to me it appears more than probable that it was a development of the Sun-worship that was the common heritage of both branches of the Aryan people—the Eranian and the Indian." His relevant arguments may be summarised thus: (i) All the legends dealing with the origins of the Bhāgavata religion are connected in some way or other with the sun. (ii) Some of the exponents, incarnations, or devotees of the cult are either descendants of the sun or connected therewith. (iii) The Bhāgavata eschatology lays down that the liberated souls first of all pass through the sun on its way to the Bhagavat. (iv) The Bhagavat is identified with Viṣṇu, who was originally a sun-god.

One wishes that most of the obscure ideas in Indian religious history could be traced back so clearly and definitely; but, unfortunately, the available data forbid us to make such a summary reconstruction. It is not necessary to trace here the development of Bhakti-ideas, whether monotheistic or otherwise, in early Indian literature; for competent scholars have already brought forward enough evidence to show that these ideas can be traced back to remote antiquity and that they had no connection, in their origin or development, with sun-worship. The inchoate Bhakti-ideas in Vedic literature are not connected

with any of its five or six solar deities, not even with Viṣṇu; but centre chiefly round the more ethical Varuṇa, who is associated indeed with the solar Mitra, but whose origin is admittedly obscure. Not even Mitra could attain the supreme eminence of his Iranian double, but merged his Vedic individuality in that of his greater associate Varuṇa. The Iranian cult may have developed as sun-worship, but no such cult centred round the Vedic Mitra. If some hymns of a devotional character are addressed to Aditi and the Ādityas, it is done chiefly through their connection with Varuṇa and through their more pronounced ethical character as deities of grace and benevolence. In the only *Upaniṣad* in which theistic devotionalism of a somewhat sectarian character is prominent and unmistakable, and which directly employs the term *bhakti*, it is connected not with a solar god but with Rudra-Śiva, a deity of entirely different origin. Our data may not be enough to determine the exact train of ideas through which Bhakti-doctrine developed in Bhāgavatism; but it is clear that the traces of the idea in early Indian literature are independent of any original or developed trait of sun-worship.

It is likewise unnecessary for us to trace in detail the early history of monotheistic ideas in Indian religious history.<sup>1</sup> We have enough evidence now to show that it is too hasty a generalisation to regard Indian monotheism as a development of sun-worship. Heliolatry is very ancient in India, and no one would deny that certain mythological figures are perhaps solar in origin. Solar myths can also be traced in some of the Indian religious cults and legends of admittedly independent origin. Some elements even of the Buddha legend, as Senart has demonstrated, can be derived from solar cults. All this may be admitted; but they cannot prove any direct or inner connection of Indian monotheism, which has a long and independent history,

<sup>1</sup> Whether Bhakti in its earlier historical stages was at all monotheistic is a question which, as Mrinal Dasgupta (*IHQ*, vi, 1930, pp. 331-33) has already shown, is extremely debatable. Early Indian monotheism need not have been a purely ethical doctrine, centring round devotional ideas; it was also speculative and ritualistic, as evidenced by the Agni-*Brahmaṇḍapati-Hiranyagarbha-Prajāpati* hymns and by later Brahmanic and theosophic theories. The idea of the All-god and the One-god must, however, be distinguished.

with any form of sun-worship. Indeed, no student of Indian religion will seriously maintain to-day that Indian monotheism, the history of which can be traced back to Vedic times, where it cannot be shown to have any connection with any of the Vedic sun-gods, is a form of heliolatry, either in its origin or in its development, even assuming the influence or contamination of solar legends and solar cults.

Even the earliest traces of Bhāgavatism as a popular cult of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa-Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva do not betray any such connection. While the legendary, euhemeristic and Brāhmaṇic elements in the frankly obscure histories of Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Vāsudeva do not involve any reference to a solar deity, the generally accepted solar origin of Viṣṇu proves nothing. Though his original solar character and his cosmic association with light, life and blessedness may have helped to raise him to his later eminence, it has yet scarcely anything to do with his epic character as a sectarian god of Viṣṇuism, Nārāyaṇism or Bhāgavatism. Even if strong traces of his solar origin are still retained in the epic conception of this deity in his many epithets, adventures, and direct identification with the sun, he is still not a solar god in the Epic, but an entirely new mythological being, transformed by new myths and legends, and re-shaped by philosophy, mysticism and practice of piety, as well as by a complex body of superstition, custom and sentiment.

Nor is epic Viṣṇuism anywhere a form of sun-worship. There are Sauras or sun-worshippers in the epic itself<sup>1</sup>, but these stand apart from the Viṣṇuites, Nārāyaṇiyas, or Bhāgavatas. If Bhakti for the Sun-god is described (in special connection with the story of Karṇa) in *Mbh.* iii. 301. 1 f. (Bomb. ed.), the epic sectarianism was elastic enough to admit, as occasion arises, Bhakti for Śiva or Brahmā, as well as for a host of other deities. Not much capital need be made out of the myths or traditions which declare that the Sātvatas or Pāñcarāṭras derive their doctrine from the Sun himself (xii. 335, 19; 339, 119f; 348, 59), or that they have a faith (curiously connected with what is called Sāṃkhya-Yoga) taught to Sarasvatī by the Sun (xii. 318, 3-6).

<sup>1</sup> The antiquity and indigenous character of the worship of the Saura cult must be admitted; but foreign influence, chiefly from Iranian sources, on the later development of the cult is also probable (see R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vāigīśvarism* etc., § 114-16).

or that the emancipated souls pass through the sun-door to Nārāyaṇa (xii. 344, 14f.). These stories or statements are somewhat qualified in the Epic itself; for all the different mythical accounts of the origin of the Pañcarātra-Nārāyaṇīya-Sātvata-Bhāgavata religion agree in deriving the doctrine directly from Nārāyaṇa himself or from the Bhagavat; the Sun in the form of Sūrya or Vivasvat being only one of the secondary recipients and promulgators (339, 110-12 and 118-21; 348; 44f.). These statements, however, are on a par with those made in the *Bhagavad-gītā* itself (iv. 1-3) that the doctrine was originally communicated to Vivasvat, or that those who die while the Sun is in his *uttarāyana* go to Brahman (ix. 24). These legends and beliefs undoubtedly show the influence of solar myths or solar cults on Pañcarātra or Bhāgavatism, but they do not prove that its monotheistic doctrine of Bhakti was derived from sun-worship. The same remarks must also apply to Vaiṣṇava hagiology, which connects its saints and incarnations with solar myths. The sources of an *Acta Sanctorum* are always diverse and polygenous. By a curious process of religious syncretism, the epic Viṣṇu as the supreme deity, as well as Viṣṇuism, absorbed older myths and legends (e.g. the cosmogonic myths of Prajāpati) and put on newer mythical identifications. The influence of independent Saura sects or Saura cults, as well as the residues of the original conception of Viṣṇu as a solar god, must have something to do with all this; and the easy-going religious attitude of the Epic, with its theory of manifestations or incarnations and with its accommodating philosophical doctrine which believed in unity but allowed its temporary personifications as diversity, did not disdain conscious or unconscious contaminations.

Barth would go a step further and regard Kṛṣṇa himself (independently, and not as identified with Viṣṇu) as a solar deity. H. Ray Chaudhuri<sup>1</sup> is right in rejecting such an opinion with the remark that the hypothesis is of a piece with those brilliant theories which would resolve the figure of the Buddha into a solar type and the history of Buddhism into a solar myth.

## THE VEDIC AND THE EPIC KRŚNA

There is some speculation regarding the identity of the epic Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa with the Kṛṣṇa of *Rg-veda* viii. 74, whom the Anukramaṇī styles Kṛṣṇa Āṅgirasa, and with Kṛṣṇa Devakī-putra, who is described as the pupil of Ghora Āṅgirasa in the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* (iii. 17. 6); and it has been suggested that a tradition existed, from the time of the *Rg-veda* and the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*, of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as a Vedic seer or teacher. This speculation is necessitated by the fact that two important features of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa emerge in the Epic, namely, Kṛṣṇa as the not-overscrupulous tribal chief, and Kṛṣṇa as the deified philosophical and religious teacher; and it is felt that the two features should be reconciled. It has been suggested that these figures belong to different cycles of legend. Some scholars have even gone to the length of separating these two aspects of Kṛṣṇa, although there is no conclusive evidence or tradition for this procedure in the Epic itself. We have R. G. Bhandarkar's suggestion, accepted by Grierson and Garbe, but rejected by Hopkins and Keith, that Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was originally a local or tribal chief who was deified, or a legendary saint of the Vṛṣṇi-Sātvatas whom he taught a monotheistic religion; that he lived in the 6th century B.C., if not earlier; that originally he was quite different from the Kṛṣṇa of whom a tradition is supposed to exist from the time of the *Rg-veda* and the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* as a seer or teacher; that Vāsudeva became identified with Viṣṇu earlier than with Kṛṣṇa; and that the legends came to be mixed up. But it must be said that these facile, though attractive, conjectures are not proved. Some scholars have even maintained that Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa did not figure at all in the original Epic, but was introduced later, perhaps to justify the action of the Pāṇḍavas; but this is also an unproved hypothesis of the same type. The existence of cycles of legend in an epic like the *Mahābhārata* is indeed not denied, but the assumption of two or several Kṛṣṇas is based upon the further *a priori* assumption that the Kṛṣṇa-legend in the Epic must be analysed into several groups, and that each of these groups was originally concerned with different persons of the same

name, but was subsequently mixed up to form one mass round one personality. Whatever plausibility these assumptions may possess, there is, unfortunately, nothing conclusive in the Epic itself, nor in the previous literature, to warrant such a complacent splitting up of the existing data.

It is noteworthy that the identity of the Vedic Kṛṣṇa with the Epic Kṛṣṇa is not at all supported by the Purāṇic tradition. We have no description, either in the Epic or in the Purāṇa, of Kṛṣṇa as a seer of Vedic Mantras or as a pupil of an Upaniṣadic seer. In the Purāṇic tradition the name of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa's teacher is given as Kāśya Saṁdīpani of Avanti, and that of his initiator as Gārga. As a Kṛṣṇa, father of Viśvakāya, is mentioned in *Rg-veda* i. 116. 28 and i. 117. 7, and a Kṛṣṇa Hārīta in *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* iii. 2. 6, it is clear that Kṛṣṇa is not an uncommon non-divine name; but the attempts to connect or identify these Kṛṣṇas, or to establish the tradition of a sage Kṛṣṇa "from the time of the *Rg-vedic* hymns to the time of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*", as R. G. Bhandarkar suggests, have not, so far, proved very successful. All that can be said without dogmatism is that there are the Vedic and Upaniṣadic Kṛṣṇas, on the one hand, and the Epic and Purāṇic Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, on the other, but that the links which would connect or identify them beyond all doubt are unfortunately missing.

These missing links are supposed to be furnished, however, in the case at least of Kṛṣṇa of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, by the fact that he is described therein as Devakī-putra, and by the allegation that there is a close similarity between the doctrines taught to Kṛṣṇa Devakī-putra in the Upaniṣad and the doctrines taught by Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Although the possibility of accidental coincidence of names is not altogether excluded, there can be no doubt that a very strong point, and perhaps the only strong point, of this view lies in the similarity of the description Devakī-putra, as well as in the comparative rarity of the name Devakī. But this one circumstance alone cannot be taken as conclusively supplying the means of connexion between the two Kṛṣṇas. For corroboration, therefore, somewhat doubtful similarity has been industriously discovered between the teachings of Ghora Āṅgirasa to Kṛṣṇa Devakī-putra and the teachings of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa to

Arjuna. As this point has been argued in some detail,<sup>1</sup> it would be worth while to discuss it here.

In the *Chāndogya-Upaniṣad* iii. 17. 6, Ghora Āṅgirasa, who is described in the *Kaushitaki-Brāhmaṇa* xxx. 6 as a priest of the Sun, teaches certain doctrines to Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, of which the three main points are the following: (i) a mystic interpretation of certain ceremonies comprised in the Vedic sacrifice as representing various functions of life, (ii) the efficacy of the practice of certain virtues, which are declared to symbolise the Dakṣinā or priest's fee, an important element in the ritual; the virtues being austerity (Tapas), liberality (Dāna), straightforwardness (Ārjava), non-injury (Ahimsā) and truthfulness (Satya-vacana), and (iii) the importance of fixing one's last thoughts on three things, namely, the Indestructible (Aksita), the Unshaken (Acyuta) and the Essence of Life (Prāṇasatiṣita); and the whole passage concludes with the citation of some Vedic Mantras in praise of the Sun. It is argued that these doctrines reappear in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the coincidence of certain passages is held to be striking. In the *Gītā*, there is symbolical interpretation of sacrifice; the virtues are also mentioned in xvi. 3; the importance of last thoughts is taught in viii. 5 and 10, while the epithets Akṣara, Acyuta etc. are also found; and lastly, the traditional communication of the original doctrines of the *Gītā* to Vivasvat or the sun-god is mentioned in iv. 1.

At first sight, these parallels appear striking enough to merit attention, but it is possible to make too much of them. It must be recognised that the teachings of Ghora Āṅgirasa, even if he is a sun-worshipper, are clearly Upaniṣadic. As the *Gītā* admittedly echoes some of the teachings of the Upaniṣads, and as some of its verses are easily shown to be made up of tags from the Upaniṣads, such verbal and other parallelisms are hardly surprising. The mystical interpretation of symbolic sacrifice or symbolising of the Vedic ritual is not at all rare in the Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣad, and cannot be said to

<sup>1</sup> Hemachandra Raychaudhuri *Early Hist. of the Vaishnava Sect*, 2nd. Ed., Calcutta University 1936, pp. 79-83. See also L. D. Barnett, *Hindu Gods and Heroes*, London 1922, pp. 82-83, and in *JRAS*, 1929, pp. 123-29, *BSOS*, v, 1928-30, pp. 635-37; W. D. P. Hill, *Bhagavadgītā* (Oxford Univ. Press), 1928, pp. 5-6.

be exclusive to the teaching of Ghora Āṅgirasa. The *Bhagavadgītā* probably borrows the idea from the general Brāhmaṇic and Upaniṣadic literature, but there is nothing to connect it with the details of the particular interpretation given by Ghora Āṅgirasa. Unless this can be shewn, the argument loses all its force. It is well-known that the *Gītā* interpretation of sacrifice is somewhat different, for it not only symbolises the sacrifice but also attempts to sanctify it by its theistic theory of desireless *Karman*. Not much capital need also be made of the enumeration of particular virtues in the *Gītā*, for it occurs in a fairly comprehensive list of godlike qualities, and forms in no sense an exclusive mention of those stated by Ghora Āṅgirasa. Nor is it a complete list of the outstanding virtues of the Bhāgavata cult, even though it mentions *Ahīnsā*<sup>1</sup> on which Barnett lays a stress greater than that found in the text itself, and argues from the prominence given to this virtue in the later development of Vaiṣṇavism. Such lists occur also in other places in the *Mahābhārata*, as well as in the *Gītā*, in the descriptions of the ideal man from various points of view; and no definite deduction can be made from such laudatory enumerations of more or less general and recognised virtues. Nothing is gained by connecting these well known virtues with the three (Dama, Tyāga and Apramāda) mentioned in the Besnagar inscription, although Apramāda of the inscription is missing in Ghora's exposition<sup>2</sup>. The fact is also overlooked that the doctrine of Dama, Tyāga and Apramāda is not unknown in other parts of the Epic, which parts have no palpable connexion with Bhāga-

<sup>1</sup> See Mrinal Dasgupta in *IHQ*, viii, 1932, pp. 79-81, where the question of *Ahīnsā* is discussed, and it is rightly concluded: "In the *Bhagavadgītā* *Ahīnsā* is mentioned as a laudable virtue and as a *śārīra tapas*, bodily penance (x. 5; xiii. 7; xiv. 2; xvii. 14); but it is out of the question that the Bhagavat should insist on this doctrine to Arjuna on the battle-field. To the *Gītā*-theory of desireless action, as well as of the immortality of the self, the distinction between injury and non-injury in itself is immaterial. It is remarkable, therefore, that while *Ahīnsā* as a religious attitude is practically ignored in the *Bhagavadgītā*, it is insisted upon in the *Nārāyaṇīya* both by legend and precept; and in this respect, later Vaiṣṇava faiths follow the *Nārāyaṇīya* rule."

<sup>2</sup> In spite of Barnett's very ingenious interpretation (*BSOS*, v, p. 139), one fails to see in the triad of the inscription "a rude summary of the same principles as that of the *Gītā*."

vatism ; it occurs, for instance, in the Sanatsujāta sub-parvan of the Udyoga<sup>1</sup>. In the same way, the doctrine of last thoughts cannot be regarded as an essential doctrine of the *Gītā*, and the mention of Akṣara, Acyuta etc. hardly proves anything. The present writer has already dealt with the next argument of the alleged connexion of Bhāgavatism with Sun worship<sup>2</sup> an argument which is even less convincing ; for no worship of the Sun is taught anywhere in the *Gītā*, and even admitting the influence of the solar cult, the alleged solar origin of Bhāgavatism is an extremely doubtful proposition.

Barnett admits that the particular parallels mentioned above are not very close, but he lays stress on their collective significance. On this there is room for reasonable difference of impression ; but it would be surely too much to maintain, as Hemchandra Raychaudhuri does, that the doctrines taught by Ghora Āṅgirasa "formed the kernel of the poem known as the *Bhagavadgītā*", and build an entire edifice of hypothesis on such scanty and precarious materials as detailed above. It must not be forgotten that the parallels in question do not at all form the cardinal or essential doctrines of the *Gītā*, far less its *summa theologiae*, as they avowedly do in the case of Ghora Āṅgirasa's teaching ; and their indebtedness or otherwise, and even their omission, in the *Gītā* would not materially affect the substance of the work.

*JHQ*, xviii, 1942.

<sup>1</sup> Critical Ed., Poona 1940, 5. 43. 14 ; Bombay Ed. 5. 43. 22 : *damas tyāgo'pramādaś ca eteṣu amṛtam īhitam.*

<sup>2</sup> In *BSOS*, vi, pt. 3, 1931, pp. 669-72. Reprinted above p. 27f.

## SOME ASPECTS OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

The value of the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been differently estimated by critical scholarship ; but it has never been denied that it ranks, as it really does, as one of the greatest religious documents of ancient India and holds a unique place in its religious life. That it contains echoes of different voices of the past admits of little doubt, but its strong and unmistakable religious note supplies the stimulus for an ultimate synthesis, which is not merely speculative but also practical. There may be some truth in the criticism that the philosophical compromise that it proposes is in some directions transcended by the mystic speculations of the *Upaniṣads*, by the positivist ethical attitude of Buddhism, or by the scholastic subtlety of later systems of philosophy ; but a greater and more ardent attempt is nowhere made to turn philosophy into practical religion and bring the individual and the universe into a personal relation with a living god. As the various earlier streams of fluid philosophical thought meet in the work, the uncertainty of its philosophical position has presented opportunities for the exercise of subtlety of interpretation, on the one hand, and scepticism regarding its consistency, on the other ; but this unique combination also explains the vital influence which the work has exercised over many types of the Indian mind. While philosophers of diverse schools interpret it in accordance with their own conceptions, and critical scholars quarrel over the question of its consistency, its deep ethical and religious fervour lifts it above sectarian and scholastic considerations and supply nourishment to devout minds as a gospel of deliverance.

Around a work of this character it is only natural that controversy should gather from the time of the early commentators to that of the modern critical interpreters. The questions regarding its date, its relation to the great Epic, the synthetic unity of its teaching, its original form and subsequent modifications, its ultimate philosophical stand-point and its religious outlook, its origin and its connexion with the history

of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva worship,—on these and many other connected problems, scholarly opinion not only in India but also in the West, has been sharply divided. In the present essay a detailed discussion of most of these difficult questions will not be our direct concern ; but we shall briefly refer to one or two preliminary points. As to the date of the work, authoritative opinion appears to be veering round the view that the work, in its present form, cannot be placed later than the beginning of the Christian era. Hindu tradition believes in its own statement that it was uttered by Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the field of Kurukṣetra. Among modern Indian scholars, Telang and R. G. Bhandarkar claim a fairly high antiquity for the work, and argue in favour of placing it not later than the beginning of the fourth century B.C. ; but Lassen and Weber bring it down to the third century A.D. Garbe, accepting the views of Hopkins regarding the final revision of the Epic as a whole, would not assign the present form of the text to a period earlier than the first or second century A.D., although he admits that the genuine *Gītā* originated probably in the first half of the second century B.C. It is not necessary for our purpose to discuss the details of any of these views, or come to a definite chronological conclusion, which by the nature of the problem is almost an impossibility. It will be sufficient for us to accept the almost unanimous admission that the work is certainly much earlier than all the existing works of a distinctly devotional character, and that, as such, it furnishes one of the earliest landmarks in the history of the Indian doctrine of religious devotion (Bhakti). In view of the facts, however, that no clear Buddhistic influence can be traced in the work, which shows a tendency of unifying cults and creeds, that it echoes the *Upaniṣads* directly and presents earlier inchoate forms of Sāṃkhya, Yoga and Vedānta, and that the worship of Vāsudeva which it inculcates may have been referred to by Pāṇini, it has never been sufficiently proved that the work could not have been produced in the pre-Buddhistic period. It will be enough for us to recognise that the presumption of an early date has not been successfully rebutted, and that most of the arguments in favour of a late date are mainly conjectural or based upon meagre and uncertain data. As the further question of the date of the *Mahā-*

*bhārata* itself and its subsequent revisions is yet a matter of controversy, it is not possible, in the present state of our knowledge, to determine at what period the *Bhagavad-gītā* found its way into the main body of the Epic or was developed further from an existing nucleus; but there is nothing to prevent us from assuming that it could not have found its way into the Epic or further developed at a very late date.

As to the process of the alleged remodelling of the work, scholarly opinion has not been unanimous, and there has been endless discussion about its original form and character. Holtzmann maintains that the *Gītā* is a Viṣṇuite remodelling of an originally pantheistic or Vedāntic poem; Hopkins thinks that it is a Kṛṣṇaite version of an older Viṣṇuite poem, which in its turn was originally a late unsectarian Upaniṣad; Garbe regards it as a popular devotional Bhāgavata tract revised in a Vedāntic sense by Brahmanism; Deussen is of opinion that it is a late product of decadent Upaniṣadic thought; Barnett believes that it is a document of the Vāsudevic cult, but that the different streams of tradition became confused in the mind of the author; Keith takes it as an Upaniṣad of the *Svetāśvatara* type adapted later to the Kṛṣṇa cult; while Belvalkar puts forward the view that it represents the last elaborate attempt made by the Śrauta religion to defend orthodox Brahmanism against the disruptive forces of the popular religion. It is not necessary to accept any of these conjectures, but it must be made clear that most of these views are more or less unproved theories or instances of facile guess-work. It is neither scientific, nor is it possible without the risk of objections and contradictions, to split up the text convincingly and separate the alleged additions on these or similar preconceived grounds.

It is not denied that, like the other portions of the Epic and like some of the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā* probably suffered occasional interpolations or that it existed in different recensions; but to maintain that the work is a poor patchwork, or to deny that it is a vital synthetic expression of a particular trend of religious thought is to miss the essential significance of the poem, as well as to go directly against the testimony of Indian tradition which has always attempted, even from different points of view, a synthetic interpretation of the poem as a whole. It is not necessary, however, to premise dogmatically

at the outset that the *Gītā* has succeeded in gathering up the different currents of thought into a compact whole ; but certain facts are revealed by the text in its present form, which may be affirmed with some amount of confidence.

If we investigate the traces of devotional ideas in the *Upaniṣads*, we can see that, within their intellectual theosophy, distinctly theistic and devotional tendencies were gradually developing<sup>1</sup>. This may have been due partly to an innate theistic strain in the *Upaniṣads* themselves and partly to the individual spiritual illumination of particular seers ; but it must have been also due to an inevitable compromise between the high philosophy and speculation about the impersonal Brahman, on the one hand, and the vivid popular faiths which, on the other, must have been gathering round the devout worship of personal gods. The impersonal Brahman was more and more personalised, until we have the presentation of the god Rudra-Siva as an aspect of the Brahman in the *Śvetāśvatara* ; on the other hand, the larger emotions and sentiments of popular faiths began to be justified and reinterpreted by the philosophy and practices of hieratic Brahmanism. Importance came to be attached to human devotion and divine grace, but the necessity of knowledge and practical activity still remained. The compromise was probably not the result of any deliberate theological attempt on either side ; for the Brahmanical religion was as much popularised as the popular religion was Brahmanised, so that in the end what issued was as much Brahmanical as popular. In the syncretic theism of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, as also in the general religious attitude of the Epic itself, we have probably a notable instance of such a fusion of two streams, the hieratic and the popular ; but they have merged and coalesced in such a manner that it is difficult now to separate them. The supposition that the popular faith was merely engrafted on Brahman orthodoxy is as much unwarranted and one-sided, as the view that Brahman orthodoxy superimposed itself upon the popular faith. The *Gītā*, as we possess it, is neither a purely priestly product, nor a purely devotional document of a popular faith. Such deliberate theological artifice, as some scholars have presumed, is hardly

<sup>1</sup> See *IHQ*, September 1930, pp. 485f.

effective in controlling the tides of religious life. It can produce a marvellous systematic theological treatise, but it is hard to believe that it could create a genuinely religious document like the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Having regard to these considerations it would be better and more historical to presume that the *Gītā* embodies a certain trend of religious thought or feeling as it finally crystallised itself, and contains as much Brahmanic as popular elements, inseparably merged into one another.

The incongruities of such an alliance between the high philosophy of an intellectual aristocracy and the living fervour of popular sentiments are, however, so great that it is only natural that critical scholars have exercised themselves a great deal over the consistency of the compromise, apparent in the *Gītā*, of the different streams of speculative thought and religious feeling. But one would be hardly justified in regarding these incongruities as extraneous and artificially connected : they form a part and parcel of its peculiar theology, and cannot be isolated or rejected without detriment to the peculiar religio-historical significance of the work. As in the *Nārāyaṇīya* episode of the *Mahābhārata*, so also here we have a strange blending of divergent ideas and sentiments ; but the speculative aspect of the *Gītā* is as much essential as the fervid religious aspect which enlivens its speculations.

The incongruities, such as they are, should thus be recognised and explained by a consideration of the probable circumstances under which the poem originated. It does not solve the problem if the critic sets about to suspect a word here and a passage there, and complacently rejects or separates them in accordance with his *a priori* theories, instead of taking into account the philosophical and religious environment which produced the poem and attempting an intrinsic and harmonious interpretation in that light. Critical scholarship may not find a consistent system in the work, but inherent inconsistencies should not be made a ground for dogmatising about successive recast of the work by different hands in different centuries. Even admitting that there are heterogeneous doctrines, exaggerations and repetitions, they do not by themselves prove the actual fact of one or more revisions. The theory of a recast document is founded for the most part on the fact that the poem attempts to reconcile so many conflicting points of

view; but there is nothing unusual in a work adopting this attitude in an age of spiritual uncertainty. It is brilliant but superficial criticism which stigmatizes such a powerful work as "an ill-assorted cabinet of primitive philosophical opinion."<sup>1</sup> Its purely philosophical position is perhaps not quite strong, but its object appears to be less philosophical than religious. It is more a reconciliation of existing beliefs and speculations by the living warmth of a dynamic religious feeling, than a careless throwing together or haphazard revision of an inconsistent medley. In realising its particular object, the work was probably not making a deliberate theological attempt, but was merely giving expression to a particular tendency of its age, to a new situation that might have arisen out of conflict of views. We should take the work in its total significance. Its unity lies in its general religious tendency and purpose, and the presence of heterogeneous ideas or of a fluid terminology is not in itself incompatible with consistent teaching, though it may be with systematic doctrine. In the diversity of opinions it absorbs, its dominating note of Bhakti as a religious attitude is clear and unequivocal, and gives a synthetic significance to its so-called medley of diverse elements.

So much has been written, and written with knowledge and insight, on the various aspects of the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, that it is not necessary within the limits of a short article to consider them here in detail. But from whatever point of view the work is approached, it would not be right to suppose that its doctrines are presented in a completely systematic form. It has not, on the one hand, the illimitable suggestiveness of the *Upaniṣads* and their tentative intuitions of metaphysical truths; it does not also, on the other hand, possess the scholastic exactitude of later systems of philosophy. It probably represents a stage midway between these two. There is no doubt that divergent ways of thought meet in it, but it would be scarcely correct to regard it as a deliberate attempt at synthesis, for the simple reason that these somewhat fluid doctrines themselves, as the *Gītā* itself as well as the various religious and philosophical documents in

<sup>1</sup> E. W. Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 399. The view is repeated by L. D. Barnett in his Eng. trs. of the *Gītā*.

the Epic would indicate, have not yet arrived at such a fully articulated stage as would place them in explicit antagonism. But since the work aims at reaching unity in the midst of such diversity by its undoubted religious power, it possesses a more synthetic character than most works of the same type. The work is not systematic, but it does not follow that it is not fundamentally consistent or definite. We shall confine ourselves in this essay chiefly to the consideration of the *Gītā* as one of the earliest ethico-religious works which inculcate a clear and fundamental doctrine of Bhakti. The philosophical background is also important and cannot be ignored, but the deep and fervid feeling with which it expresses certain aspects of an early Bhakti religion is of much greater interest. It has been often doubted whether the two streams, one essentially reflective and the other predominantly emotional, have found perfect fusion in the poem; but there is no proof that the one element ever existed independently of the other in an earlier form of the text. The essential and unifying inspiration of the work, however, is to be found not so much in this fact of fusion as in its warmer devotional element, which gives it its unique place in the religious history of India.

It has been already amply demonstrated by competent scholars that the *Bhagavad-gītā* shows a full knowledge of the earlier philosophical and religious literature. The Brāhmaṇic ritualism and its dogmas, which must have by this time well-nigh spent their force, are recognised in many a scattered passage<sup>1</sup>, but there is an anxiety to reinterpret and reconcile them to its own peculiar teachings. The formal conformity of the ritualist, who believes in the efficacy of a correct performance of the Vedic Sacrifice, is disapproved, but the way of ritualism is not altogether rejected. The cosmic purpose of the Vedic Sacrifice is still admitted, but it is fully emphasised that the normal ritualistic acts should not be undertaken with the narrow object of specific rewards or for the mere purpose of attaining merit. Those who desire lower ends, no doubt, attain them; but such ends do not carry them very far. Such merit is exhausted after a time, and there is no permanent

<sup>1</sup> ii. 42-46; iii. 9-16; iv. 23-33; ix. 20-21; xvi. 22-23; xvii. 11-13 & xviii. 3-8.

release from the cycle of births and deaths. Those, on the other hand, who abjure all desire for the fruits of action and dedicate them to the Bhagavat attain mental equipoise and elevation above their work, which lead them to true devotion and ultimate salvation. An attempt is also made to rationalise the *Yajña* or Sacrifice by understanding it in a wider and more spiritual sense, a tendency which set in at the *Upaniṣadic* period but which is further developed in a new way. There are many ways, we are told, of performing sacrificial acts, but we may distinguish the literal performance from the symbolical. Restraint of the senses, attainment of knowledge, indeed all dutiful acts, all *Tapas*, are spoken of as symbolical sacrifices. If they are done in a spirit of perfect selflessness, they are *Sāttvika*; if with a selfish purpose, they are *Rājasika*; if in ignorance, they are *Tāmasika*. The root-idea of a *Yajña* is the sacrificing of the lower for the higher good. Generalising this concept, the highest *Yajña* is held to be that in which a man lays down all his cosmic desires and interests at the altar of the Bhagavat. Thus, accepting the authoritativeness of the Brāhmanic ritualism, as well as the right performance of the prescribed duties of caste and class, the *Gītā* makes them subservient to its peculiar doctrine of *Karman* in relation to *Bhakti*.

In the same way, the *Gītā* shows a full knowledge of the diverse teachings of the *Upaniṣads*, but modifies them in its own light. The *Upaniṣadic* doctrine of *Ātman-Brahman*, the conception of *Puruṣa*, and the somewhat late idea of *Īśvara* are clearly represented in the *Gītā*, as well as the Yogic methods of self-realisation, the description of Sacrifice as a form of Brahman and its mystical explanation, the doctrine of *Devayāna* and *Pitryāna* ways and other minor technicalities made current by the *Upaniṣads*. The *Brahma-vidyā* is acknowledged, and all its religious implications are fully drawn out; but the impersonal Brahman is fully personalised, and the efficacy of pure knowledge for release and of the quietistic methods of the *Upaniṣads* is admitted only up to a certain point. The *Gītā* assures us that all this is *Sāṃkhya* doctrine, but in reality it is *Upaniṣadic*, and does not resemble the *Sāṃkhya* of later times. But by *Sāṃkhya*, which as a technical term is contrasted with *Yoga*, is probably meant the reflective and meditative method of those who rely on knowledge for release; *Yoga* is the attain-

ment of self-control and balance of mind by a selfless performance of ordained duties.

Somewhat in the manner of the *Svetāśvatra Upaniṣad* the *Gītā* speaks of three aspects of godhead, admitting two parallel manifestations of Prakṛti or primal Matter and Jīvātman or individual Soul, and regarding them both as phases of the cosmic form of the Ātman or Brahman, who is of course identified with the Bhagavat. The doctrine is metaphorically set forth in the well known description of the Kṣetra and the Kṣetrajña in ch. xiii. where the Kṣetra or the Field is presumably the ceaseless area (in the Sāṃkhya manner) of the activity of Prakṛti, as the seat of the conditioned soul, the Kṣetrajña, who is an aspect of the supreme Kṣetrajña, the Bhagavat, indwelling in all Kṣetras. Although the *Gītā* does not accept the Sāṃkhya theory of non-active Puruṣa and its silence about God, the Sāṃkhya terminology of categories, which was apparently ancient, is introduced to explain the relation of the supreme self to the material and spiritual worlds of conditioned being. The evolution of Prakṛti is attributed to the five elements and the Buddhi, Manas, Ahaṅkāra etc., which correspond to the twenty-four principles of Sāṃkhya as phases of energising Matter; and the doctrine of the three Guṇas is recognised in explaining cosmic causation and activity. The *Gītā* also speaks of two Puruṣas, the perishable and the imperishable, as well as a third Puruṣa or Puruṣottama, who transcends both the perishable and the imperishable, so that the three Puruṣas are really one Puruṣa in three aspects. The theistic Puruṣa-doctrine is obviously a development of the Upaniṣadic teaching, and not of the Sāṃkhya which denies a supreme Puruṣa and believes in an infinite number of separate Puruṣas. It will be thus seen that although the *Gītā* employs the Sāṃkhya terminology, it does not employ it always in its Sāṃkhya signification; nor does it accept all the implications of the classical Sāṃkhya metaphysics. The *Gītā* is openly theistic, but the Sāṃkhya avoids the question of God. The Sāṃkhya influence is recognised in its conception of Prakṛti and Puruṣa, but the dualism is reconciled by the existence of an Uttama Puruṣa. It would seem, therefore, that some forms of inchoate Sāṃkhya doctrine existed when the work was composed, but the later classical Sāṃkhya philosophy was probably unknown.

The *Gītā* does not appear to accept the specifically Vedāntic position of the unreality of Matter, but holds firmly to the Sāṃkhya in this respect. The term Māyā is indeed employed, but the Māyā is not material existence. It is rather the mode in which the Matter is apprehended by the Mind, both of which are eternal verities. The *Gītā* appears to agree with the *Svetāśvatara* in making Iśvara the creator of Māyā which, however, is not identical with Prakṛti or with Avidyā. It is the divine power of cosmic illusion whereby, through the medium of Prakṛti and the Guṇas, the Iśvara veils his real being<sup>1</sup>.

These and other instances of absorption and reconciliation of divergent philosophical ideas make it almost futile to seek in the *Gītā* a technically perfect philosophical system, promulgated with scholastic accuracy and precision. Its philosophical teaching has all the characteristics of the confused philosophy of the Epic itself and its somewhat fluid terminology. The essentially religious, rather than philosophical, character of the work is also clear from the way in which certain older metaphysical ideas are harmonised, even if somewhat incongruously, with its clearly theistic and devotional attitude. Its mystical-devotional reconciliation is indeed often brilliant, but from the point of view of cold reasoning it does not always give us exact information as to how contradictory ideas are to be logically combined. The problem, for instance, of the transformation of the impersonal Absolute into a personal God is solved by the supposition that it is due to Māyā or cosmic illusion; in other words, it is a mystery. In the same way is explained the relation of the Absolute to the world. The final union of the individual self with the supreme, which the Sāṃkhya explains by the action of the purified Buddhi, is attributed in the *Gītā* to divine grace responding to human faith and love.

The *Gītā* accepts implicitly the Upaniṣadic Brahma-vidyā in a somewhat modified form, but it hardly subscribes to the extreme Upaniṣadic standpoint of quietism or release through knowledge. With its characteristic attitude of tolerance and compromise, the *Gītā* does not entirely reject the way of knowledge, of Jñāna-yoga, which (designated as the practice of the

<sup>1</sup> In this the *Gītā* agrees partially with the Nārāyaṇiya conception of Māyā; cf. *IHQ*, March 1932, p. 67.

Sāṃkhya) teaches the intellectual intuition of the Absolute by the casting off (Sarṇyāsa) of all works and practising meditation on the distinction between Self and not Self. This intellectual gnosis of the old Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya is indeed recognised, but the method is not commended because of its difficulty and uncertainty of success. Much easier, we are told, is the way of works (Karma-yoga), which consists in the performance of all social and religious duties in a spirit of perfect selflessness and devotion. Thus, while not rejecting the "Sāṃkhya" or philosophy based on knowledge, it makes a special pleading for "Yoga" or philosophy based on action; for it aims at teaching not so much a system of speculation as a rule of life. The traditional doctrine of Karman is accepted but with certain important modifications. The *Gītā* disapproves, as we have seen, the method of those who act with a desire for reward; but it does not also approve of the view of those who push the doctrine of Karman to its misdirected logical extreme and teach that inasmuch as action binds the self to Samsāra or repeated rebirth, release can be attained by a complete cessation from activity.

But meditative discipline, we are told, is as important for the Way of Knowledge as for the Way of Action. A mood of detachment and equipoise (*samatva*) must be secured in order that works done under the rule of action become in the end no-works, and do not fetter the self. Apart from practical Yogic methods, this is achieved, in the first place, by a conscientious discharge of all proper duties (Dharma); in the second place, works must be performed without 'attachment,' that is, without egoistic consciousness of the agent (*hṛtytvā-bhimāna*) and desire for the fruit (*phalāśā*); and lastly, devoid of selfish thought or purpose, all acts and their fruits must be dedicated to the Bhagavat, making every act an offering of devotion and love. The complete abandonment of egoism and purposiveness destroys that element in action which fetters the self to material existence and causes rebirth, for works done in this spirit are really no-works. He has truly abandoned action who has abandoned the interest and the fruits thereof. This is true renunciation (Sarṇyāsa), true control (Yoga), and prepares one infallibly for divine grace and salvation. It involves no irresponsible renunciation of ordained duties, no

break from wholesome social life, but brings into play the best elements of human nature. It is not the meditative inactivity taught by some philosophers, for it is a state of inaction (*Naiṣkarmya*) reached through right action.

The discipline thus prescribed is not only moral but also religious. The universal order of things demands activity from man, but if his actions are disinterested he conforms to the categorical moral imperative of doing his duty because it is duty. But he also performs his duty because it is the will of God, to whom he dedicates all his acts and the fruits thereof. The aspirant truly becomes a *Yogin* and *Sāmnyāsin*, disciplined in sense and intellect; but the spirit of constant love and service gives a spiritual significance to his merely ethical acts. Thus, the activism which the *Gītā* presents is not a formal conformity to a prescribed code, but is based upon a knowledge or philosophy of action and a strong religious feeling. This makes every act of life symbolically an act of sacrifice, frees the self from attachment and delusion, and absolves it from the polluting effect of action. The Bhagavat himself sets the highest example of work by incarnating himself from time to time in a cosmic spirit of self-surrendering grace for the good of the world. His cosmic work is no-work because it is done in divine unselfishness, and does not involve Him in the bondage of *Karman*. By dedicating all works to Him, the devotee merges, as it were, his own individual action in His cosmic action, his own individuality in His cosmic life. This ethical and theistic position gives a remarkable synthesis of the ancient fatalistic axiom of *Karman* with the belief in a personal god of grace and love, admitting its inexorableness but tempering, moralising and sanctifying it with the idea of divine cosmic work and grace. Under this teaching, human activity, like the divine, does not transgress but transcends the law of *Karman*.

This brings us to the special doctrine of the *Gītā*, the *Bhakti-yoga*, the spirit of love and service to a personal god, which supplies the unifying principle to the alliance it seeks to establish between Knowledge and Work, Renunciation and Devotion. The older philosophic speculation had already taught that knowledge alone is the way to release, but the *Gītā* maintains that this knowledge, partly won by intellectual and partly by practical activity of a certain kind, is the know-

ledge, not of an unqualified entity, but of a Being of infinite good qualities and illimitable grace. He is the Ātman, Brahman, Iśvara, Puruṣa or Puruṣottama, but He is also really, though infinitely, qualified by all conceivable good attributes, informing with reality the eternal but conditioned categories of matter (Prakṛti) and individual self (Jīva), which emerge periodically from Him into manifestation. The power by which He thus determines Himself into conditioned being is His own cosmic power of illusion or Māyā, which veils His true nature. The way of approach may be found through knowledge or through austere works, but in all seekings there must be an undivided spirit of loving devotion and service, which alone is capable of finding what is even hidden from the sage or the Yогin.

The Upaniṣads had already prescribed certain methods of symbolic meditation for turning the senses inward and attaining a mystical intuition of Reality, but they had also gradually reached an almost theistic position of realising an all-indwelling and all-transcending Brahman, who is invested more or less with personal attributes and conceived as Iśvara. The purely intellectualistic position of meditation on the unconditioned Non-manifest is characterised by the *Gitā* as *Avyakta-upāsanā* which is indeed a way of approach but which involves a long and troublesome process of discipline, open only to the few. It is easier to concentrate upon a concrete object of worship; and the *Vyakta-upāsanā*, which is meditation upon the Absolute as a manifest and concrete personality, is not only open to all, but also affords a scope for a direct personal relation of love and service.

This vital and vitalising element of Bhakti changes the emphasis from the speculative to the practical, and converts what would have been a merely philosophical treatise into a powerful religious document. It teaches the love and service of a personal god of love and grace, probably in an age when God was being lost in divergent speculations. It gives expression to a form of synthesis between the conflicting conceptions of previous thinkers and ritualists, on the one hand, and the popular worship of a personal god, on the other. It presents the worshipper with a visible object of devotion approachable at all times and places, and teaches the value of a harmonious combination of knowledge, discipline and service.

in religious life. As the teaching checks extreme rationalism, on the one hand, it tends, on the other, to rationalise blind sectarianism by placing it on the firm foundation of knowledge and discipline, and by preaching tolerance to all modes of worship as aspects merely of the worship of a supreme deity. Whatever value its synthesis of traditional philosophical and religious views may be held to possess, there can be no doubt that it speaks of Bhakti with no uncertain voice; and it is this element which supplies stimulus to its synthesis and gives it whatever unity it possesses.

There is no direct exposition or philosophical justification in the work of the doctrine of Bhakti and Prasāda, probably for the reason that the mutual relation of the devotee and the deity is regarded as an object of realisation, and not of description or discussion. But the leading ideas are clear. Bhakti may begin with belief or Śraddhā, and belief implies the recognition of an object which is true and worthy of devotion; but it is essentially a proper activity of the emotional possibilities of human nature in its striving after the supreme or the ideal, which affords an escape from the limits of egoism. As it is essentially an emotion, it implies a dualism, as well as the fact of a living personal relation. The supreme or ideal, therefore, cannot be an abstraction or a shadow of our own minds, but it must have a concrete individual existence, with which loving communion is possible. At the same time, it cannot be entirely foreign to, or entirely identical with, the consciousness of the aspirant, in order that it may be the object of attainment. There is, thus, a necessity for an undivided and endless striving of the intellect, will and feeling, and for an awe-inspiring sense of the supreme, and of consequent humility and self-surrender; but the striving at every point touches the ideal because the unfailing and infinite love of the supreme responds to the full and self-surrendering love of the individual.

The Bhakti of the *Gītā* is, no doubt, an emotional attitude of worship, which every true religion must recognise, but from what has been said above, it is clear that it is not a blind intensity of feeling or an unreasoned ecstasy, divorced from knowledge or the duties of practical life. It is emphasised that emotion must have a high place in a religious attitude, but true emotion cannot be over-emphasised and isolated from

knowledge and work. The true Bhakti is declared to be the most vital of all elements which contribute to that equipoise or balance of mind (*samāvās*), in which reason, will and emotion play their proper part, because it leads to the consecration of every act of life to the disinterested service of the Lord. The various descriptions of the ideal man, whether he is the Jñānin, the Sthita-prajña, the Yoga-rūḍha, the Brahma-bhūta, the Guṇātīta or the Bhakta,<sup>1</sup> practically depict the same man looked at from the points of view of Jñāna, Karman or Bhakti. In this respect the speculative and ethical Bhakti of the *Gītā* differs from the Bhakti of the mediaeval emotionalists, who would reject Jñāna, and even Karman, and regard ecstatic passion of a mystic-erotic nature as essential. The *Gītā* doctrine is characterised by a broader view of human personality, and it does not, therefore, isolate the fervour of religious emotion from intellectual seriousness and ethical activity.

We have found the same broadness of outlook in the liberal tendencies of the *Gītā* in recognising whatever value there was in older beliefs and practices. A similar attitude of toleration and compromise also marks its views about "other gods" and other modes of worship.<sup>2</sup> When the Bhagavat calls upon Arjuna to leave all and follow him (xviii. 65-66), he should be understood as preaching sectarian worship, but the *Gītā* by its speculative equipoise and its liberal attitude regarding liberty of thought and worship, rises far above narrow sectarianism; and it is a high tribute to its achievement in this direction that it has lent itself to interpretations other than Bhāgavata, and has been understood as teaching even such extreme idealistic monism as that of Śaṅkara.<sup>3</sup> The justification of this tolerant attitude is found in the recognition of the infinite variety

<sup>1</sup> ii. 55-72; vi. 4-32; x. 9-10; xii. 13-20; xiii. 7-11; xiv. 21-35; xvi. 1-3; xviii. 50-60.

<sup>2</sup> iv. 11; vii. 21-23; ix. 23-25.

<sup>3</sup> It is, however, noteworthy that most of the other *Gītās* embedded in the present text of the Epic are hardly sectarian in the narrow sense. Most of these are brief, and have the special object of discussing some moral or philosophical problem. They have no special deity like Śiva to plead for. The Viśakha *Gītā* (xii. 264), for instance, is a brief denunciation of the use of unclean meat and drink; the *Vyātra Gītā* (xii. 278) is an exposition of doctrine of Karman, Saṃsāra etc.; the *Utathya Gītā* (xii. 90-91) describes the virtues of a Kṣatriya; see *IHQ*, 1927, pp. 7f.

of aspects in which the supreme deity may present itself to the diversity of men and minds, as well as in the view that some kind of worship is better than none. The worship offered to other deities is represented as indirect, even if imperfect, worship offered to the Bhagavat himself. Different men are actuated by different motives and desires ; but a man is as his thoughts and desires are, and attains what he seeks. Those who desire lower ends and worship lower forms receive their ends and their fruits of worship accordingly ; for the Lord resorts to men in the way in which he is approached. The lower forms are really stepping stones to the higher, for worship offered with devotion to whatsoever deity has its own reward, and prepares the mind to higher consciousness. Other devotees attain finite ends ; but the devotees of the Supreme attain Him.

Sectarian prejudice is thus disapproved by teaching that the sectarian gods are really different aspects of the supreme deity ; and the Mahābhārata doctrine of Avatāra helped to absorb these "other gods" as aspects of or identical with the Bhagavat.<sup>1</sup> The *Gītā* recognises different kinds and grades of devotees (vii. 16-18 ; xii. 9-12), for a man's faith is determined according as he is influenced by the qualities of goodness, activity or ignorance (xvii. 2f ; xv. 6f). With the exception of scoffers and unbelievers (xvi. 19f), the *Gītā* shows an anxiety to throw the way of Bhakti open to men of all castes and conditions, even including the Śūdras and women, who have been excluded by Brahmanic orthodoxy, as well as to the feeblest seeker, the worst of sinners, and the ignorant who conforms blindly to Śāstric injunctions and knows nothing higher (iii. 25-26). The *Gītā* accepts the established social order, and approves of the injunctions regarding the duties of different castes and stages of life (xviii. 41-45 ; xvi. 23-24) ; but its sanctifying theory of desireless and devotional action does not make caste or condition a barrier, but an avenue, to salvation.

The doctrine of Bhakti, therefore, is presented in a very simple and comprehensive form, and does not show any such bewildering and unattractive display of analysis as the mediae-

<sup>1</sup> It must be noted that the incarnations in the Epic belong peculiarly and almost exclusively to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa ; we have little or nothing of the incarnations of other deities.

val exponents of the Bhakti cult delight to elaborate. Although various means are suggested for the realisation of the devotional attitude, it is recognised that no fixed rules can be laid down. The Bhakta need not, like the followers of Jñāna- and Karma-kānda, practise his devotion singly or in solitude, nor need he engage himself in elaborate schemes of ritual; he may (x. 9) meet other devotees, and enlighten one another by religious discourses. But the feeling must mould itself according to the habits and minds of men. Thus, giving up of sense-desires, turning the mind inward by means of symbols and discipline, Yogic methods, realisation of the supreme being in nature and self, contemplation of divine attributes, constant remembrance, discourse and conversation on God, adoration and external worship, selfless performance of all acts as dedicated to God,—by mentioning these and other ways of spiritual experience and worship, the *Gītā* recognises that the one supreme God, revealing himself in different ways, can be approached and worshipped by no fixed rule or method. To all men the Bhagavat is impartial, desiring in his infinite grace the welfare of all, and resorts to men in the way in which they resort to him. All may approach him, and these are only some of the means. But supreme devotion in the end implies complete self-surrender, not in inactivity but in selfless activity, not in ignorance but in the fulness of knowledge, merging one's life in His cosmic life, dedicating all thought, action and feeling to Him.

As the doctrine seeks to establish a personal relationship between the deity and the devotee, it not only invests the deity with a personality and an infinitude of attributes, but it also emphasises divine grace on the one hand, and man's need of loving devotion on the other. One of the greatest acts of divine graciousness to the world is God's coming to birth from birthlessness by his own cosmic power of illusion (Māyā) and veiling his real nature by manifesting himself as an individual at the time of the world's need. The doctrine of Avatāra or periodical descent of godhead, which should be distinguished from the Vyūha doctrine ignored in the *Gītā*, is generally acknowledged in the *Mahābhārata*; but the fact of Avatāra in this work is probably a necessary corollary to its proposed identification of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, whose worship it inculcates as

the Bhagavat, with the Supreme Being. The doctrine of repeated Avatāras was also necessary to connect him with earlier cosmogonic and theriomorphic myths and legends. Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa is thus identified not only with Viṣṇu, the greatest deity in the Epic, as well as with his various forms and incarnations, but is also related to Śiva, Brahmā and other gods of rival sects, who are subsumed under one supreme name. In this way the doctrine attempts to establish a unity of godhead and check blind sectarian attitude by its somewhat elastic and tolerant scope. The *raison d'être* of the Avatāra doctrine, however, is found in the recognition of the supreme deity as the upholder of the moral order of the world, and in the somewhat deistic conception of repeated descents for setting the world right. Looked at from another point of view, the doctrine implies the deification of the human, a belief in superior beings who become the embodiment of the divine. It affords, therefore, tangible and effective divine ideals towards which imperfect mortals may strive and grow.

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## A NOTE ON PAÑCA-KĀLA IN CONNECTION WITH PAÑCARĀTRA

The significance of the difficult term *pañca-kāla* used in *Mahābhārata* xii. 338. 4 (Bombay ed.), does not appear to have been satisfactorily cleared up. It occurs in the list of the hundred names which Nārada utters (along with the epithet or description *pāñcarātrika*) in praise of Nārāyaṇa in the well-known Nārāyaṇīya episode of the Epic. The full name or title of the deity appears in the text as *pañca-kāla-kṛty-pati*, explained by Nilakanṭha as "the lord of the *pañca-kāla* and of the *pañca-kṛty*". Again, the devotees of Nārāyaṇa, the Ekāntins who worshipped him in the mythical Śvetadvīpa, are also called (xii. 336. 46) *pañca-kālajīṇas*, apparently meaning "those who know *pañca-kāla*"; and this passage, though not commented upon by Nilakanṭha, has an obvious connection with the passage under discussion, which Nilakanṭha explains. We are not concerned here with *pañca-kṛty*, which is interpreted, not very satisfactorily, by a reference to *Bhagavad-gītā* xviii. 14-15, where the five sources of a man's action are enumerated; but Nilakanṭha thinks that the *pañca-kālas* or "five times", of which Nārāyaṇa is said to be the lord, are the day and night (*ahorātra*), month (*māsa*), season (*ritu*), half-year or solstice (*ayana*) and the year (*sarvavatsara*). This interpretation is scarcely convincing; for, even if it applies to Nārāyaṇa, who may be supposed to preside over this temporal dispensation it is not clear as to what the Ekāntins have to do with a knowledge of this division of time. There is, on the other hand, no support for Grierson's equation<sup>1</sup> of *pañca-kāla* with the specific "Pañcarātra rules", which are connected with the five times at which the five sacrifices (i.e. the daily offering of the Pañca-Mahāyajñas of Gṛhya and Smṛti works) are said to be performed. The fact that Nārāyaṇa's special devotee Uparicara-Vasu is mentioned (xii. 337. 30) as performing five sacrifices to the deity at five times is hardly enough to connect the term with the five Brāhmaṇic domestic rituals and corroborate the etymology or significance

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Antiquary*, September 1908, pp. 265 and 266, footnote 53.

suggested. The orthodox five *Mahāyajñas* need not be performed at five different times of the day; at least no such five times are prescribed. Nor need they be performed in honour of *Nārāyaṇa*. The *Nārāyaṇīya pañca-kāla*, therefore, need not be connected with them. It may be suggested that the term refers to the rites and services to be performed by a *Vaiṣṇava* during a day, which is divided into five parts. Such observances apparently form the theme of later *Vaiṣṇava* ceremonial works like *Pañca-kāla-krama*<sup>1</sup>, *Pañca-kāla-kriyā-dīpa*<sup>2</sup>, or *Pañca-kāla-paddhali*<sup>3</sup>—of which observances a remote tradition may be presumed to have existed from the epic times. But it would be hardly critical, in the absence of further evidence, to import a meaning from the later developments of *Vaiṣṇavism* into the *Nārāyaṇīya* or *Pañcarātra* cult of the Epic. Unless the word can be shown to refer to some obscure rites or doctrines of a special character of the *Nārāyaṇīyas*, *Ekāntins*, or *Pañcarātras*, we are inclined to offer the explanation that *Pañcakāla* is nothing more than an extended synonym or variation of the term *Pañcarātra* as a designation of the cult itself. The term *pañca-kāla-pati*, as an epithet of *Nārāyaṇa*, would then be easily connected with the other one, *pañcarātrika*<sup>4</sup>, used by *Nārada* in the immediate context; and the *Ekāntins* would be *pañca-kālajñas* in the sense that they were well versed in the *Pañcarātra* doctrine.

We are concerned here directly with the origin and precise meaning of the term *Pañcarātra*.<sup>5</sup> Leaving aside fanciful etymologies suggested,<sup>6</sup> we need not discuss in detail whether the

<sup>1</sup> Described in *Descriptive Cat. of Govt. Oriental MS Library, Madras*, vol. v, p. 2073.

<sup>2</sup> Mentioned in Burnell, *Tanjore Catalogue*, p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> Included in Oppert, *Lists of Sansk. MSS in Southern India*, No. 291.

<sup>4</sup> *Nilakanṭha* explains this term as "one who is attainable by the scripture of the *Pañcarātras* (*pañcarātrīgama-gamyā*).

<sup>5</sup> It is scarcely necessary to point out that, even if their origin might have been independent, the *Pañcarātras* are apparently identified with the *Ekāntins* or *Nārāyaṇīyas* in the Epic. Apart from the fact that *Nārāyaṇa* himself is called *Pañcarātrika*, we are told (xii, 339, 110 f) that the *Pañcarātras* only intensified the cult introduced by *Nārada*, which must be the doctrine explained to him by *Nārāyaṇa* himself.

<sup>6</sup> A. Govindācārya Svāmin in *JRAS*, 1911, pp. 940 f.

term should be connected (1) with Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa's *pañcarātra sātra* described in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (xiii. 6. 1) as lasting over five nights, or (2) with the five (*pañca*) principal topics or kinds of knowledge (*rātra*, as the apocryphal *Nāradīya* puts it) dealt with in the later Pañcarātra system or texts, or again, (3) with the later dogma of the school which speaks of five-fold manifestation of the supreme deity by means of his Para, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmin, and Arcā forms.<sup>1</sup> But it is clear that the last two (and other such) explanations of the term are connected with later developments of the school or system, and cannot be authenticated by anything contained in the description of the cult in the Epic itself. The original records of the cult are not available, but in the absence of any other data, the Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa hypothesis appears to be the most plausible explanation. If this view is accepted, then it is not difficult to connect the specific connotation of time, involved in Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa's continuous sacrifice for five days and implied in the designation Pañcarātra of the cult itself, with the obvious general signification of time in the term Pañca-kāla employed with reference to Nārāyaṇa and his Ekāntins. Is it possible that the Pañcarātras had a mysterious five-day rite in imitation of the mythical *pañca-rātra sātra* of the original Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa, just in the same way as the mythical three strides of Viṣṇu, as a personification of Brāhmaṇic sacrifice, were imitated by the Brāhmaṇic sacrificer's three strides in the ritual? Perhaps the performance of five sacrifices at five times in honour of Nārāyaṇa by the legendary Ekāntin, Uparicara-Vasu, has something to do with such a rite.

JRAS, 1931.

<sup>1</sup> F. Otto Schrader, *Introduction to the Pañcarātra*, Adyar (Madras), 1916, pp. 24 f. Or the term Pañcarātra may be supposed to refer to the five forms of worship of the system, viz., *abhiṣamana*, *upādāna*, *ijyā*, *sraddhyā*, and *yoga*, which Saṅkara mentions (on *Brahma-sātra* ii. 2. 42) in his notice of the school.

## SECTS AND SECTARIAN WORSHIP IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

### *Rise of Sectarianism*

It is difficult, in the absence of tangible evidence, to trace the rise and growth of sectarianism in the post-Vedic period<sup>1</sup>. Although they swayed the lives of a larger population and had been of greater living force, the sectarian faiths were possessions of the masses which, being dissociated from the sympathy of the orthodox hierarchy, appear to have left no records of their own. But from a consideration of the general trend of thought and practice in this period, however obscure it may be, one can presume that while the formal sacrificial religion of the Brāhmaṇas was being gradually replaced by the more intellectual theosophy of the *Upaniṣads*, not only theistic but also devotional tendencies were slowly developing within this intellectual theosophy itself. This is evident especially in the younger group of major *Upaniṣads*<sup>2</sup>. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*<sup>3</sup>, for instance, the word *Bhakti*, signifying devotion to a god (Deva), distinctly occurs,—for the first time in Indian religious history; and a theistic tendency, bordering on the devout, emerges. It centres round a somewhat inchoate sectarianism,<sup>4</sup> which does not indeed reject the impersonal Brahman,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Samhitās* and Brāhmaṇas, some gods are given special elevation by some families of priests (e.g., Indra by *Grītsamada*, Varuṇa by *Vasiṣṭha*, Agni by *Aṅgiras*, the *Aśvins* by *Kakṣīvat* and *Ghoṣa*), but this should not be taken as indicating the existence of cults or sects.

<sup>2</sup> For a study of the theistic tendencies, original or developed, in the *Upaniṣads* in general and in younger *Upaniṣads* like *Kaṭha*, *Mundaka* and *Śvetāśvatara* in particular, see *IHQ*, vi, 1930, pp. 493-512.

<sup>3</sup> On the theistic trend of this *Upaniṣad*, see R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisīṣṭārṇava, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, Strassburg, 1913, pp. 110-11; S. K. Belvalkar and R. D. Ranade, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Poona 1927, ii, pp. 300f. Both Bhandarkar and Barth (*Religions of India*, Eng. trs., p. 207) would take it as a kind of Saivite *Bhagavad-gītā*.

<sup>4</sup> The *Upaniṣad* is not in the strict sense a sectarian work, for the idea of a personal god, who is equalised with the impersonal Brahman, is here clothed in the language and convention of *Upaniṣadic* thought; and Rudra-Siva is not raised to supreme godhead to the exclusion of other

but tends towards its more personalised form in a new great god, Rudra-Śiva, derived partially from orthodox mythology and recreated partially by popular belief.<sup>1</sup> This presumably indicates a compromise between the high speculation of the *Upaniṣads*, which was held in great esteem, and the popular faiths, which now demanded recognition. The common Aryan people must have had their own beliefs and practices, but these must have been profoundly modified (as they very notion of Rudra-Śiva itself indicates) by the cultural ideas of the non-Aryan people of the Gangetic plain. We have as yet no means to determine the exact nature and extent of the influence which contact with non-Aryan culture exerted on the Aryan; but it is now generally admitted that the fusion of races and cultures, which probably began even in the Vedic age, must have been a great factor in the development of the philosophy and religion of the post-Vedic times.<sup>2</sup> The so-called popular element, as distinguished from the hieratic, was thus a strange blending of polygenous ideas and fancies. In course of time a mutual reaction between the two was inevitable, and the barrier, which was probably never a rigid one,<sup>3</sup> broke down. An exclusive ritual and a highly philosophical creed had to be relaxed so far, even for their self-existence, as to adopt deities and countenance practices to which the heterodox popular religion inclined; while the mass of people, having little time or interest in elaborate ritual and speculative abstraction, allowed their larger emotions and sentiments to be recognised, re-inter-

gods. At the same time Rudra-Śiva, who is also called Deva, Iśa, Iśāna, Giriśa, Hara and Maheśvara, is not a mere abstraction, but a vivid and real deity, whose powers are spoken of as Iśānis.

<sup>1</sup> The *Maitrīyopaniṣad* goes much further and refers the trinitarian dogma of Brahman, Rudra and Viṣṇu. In some of the very late neo-*Upaniṣads*, like the *Māhānātmyopaniṣad* the *Kāraṇyopaniṣad* and the *Atharva-vākya* the influx of sectarian ideas is more definite, and the word Bhakti is freely used. There are also specific *Vaiṣṇava Upaniṣads* like the *Gopala-tāpni*, *Rāma-tāpni* etc., from which later *Vaiṣṇava* sects derive their authority. As they are works of distinctly late sectarian inspiration, we need not take them into account here.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. B. Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads*, Cambridge Mass., 1925, pp. 55-57.

<sup>3</sup> As the content of the *Atharva-veda* and parts of the *Rg-veda* would shew.

preted and even assimilated by the intellectual aristocracy, in order to obtain the stamp of orthodox authority.

Thus, about the time when formal heresies, which came to a head in Jainism and Buddhism, were assailing the very core of the Śrauta religion, the orthodox ritual and creed were faced with the no less difficult task of remodelling themselves by assimilating and moulding the current popular beliefs and practices of the new environment. These popular cults, centering round the worship of Rudra-Śiva, Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa or Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, were strongly marked by a tendency towards emotional devotionalism, which must have had a disintegrating and even disruptive effect on the older ritualistic and theosophic religion. The emergency led, on the one hand, to a practical codification of the older tradition and stricter regulation of daily life and conduct in the Śrauta-, Grhaya- and Dharmasūtras; on the other hand, it resulted in a renewed and systematic philosophic activity, sometimes keeping more faithfully to the old Upaniṣadic spirit (*Vedānta*), but sometimes starting from a different point and diverging more widely (*Sāṅkhya*). But all this did not prove enough, and an entire re-shaping of the older religion gradually began. The elasticity of orthodox philosophy admitted a whole world of new personal gods as a temporary reality into its idealistic scheme; and the old placid theology, disturbed by the new worship of the sectaries, conceived its old gods anew as wielding power of love and grace. There may not have been any deliberate theological attempt; but the result of gradual compromise is seen not only in the fully developed sectarianism of the *Mahābhārata* in general, which is a mixture of the old and the new, but also in particular in the syncretic theism of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which cannot be satisfactorily explained as an isolated phenomenon. As there was a strain, original or developed, of theism in the Upaniṣads themselves, it could easily, if not perfectly, mingle with the theistic element of the popular cults. If the one was predominantly reflective and the other essentially emotional, both the theistic streams had their source in the same hopes and longings of the human heart; and this fact could partially reconcile, if not fully obliterate, the incongruities of a strange alliance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted in this connexion that the popular faiths could not have been 'anti-Brahmanical' in the sense in which G. A. Grierson

Whatever divergent form it might have taken by this process, the ultimate epic religion was monotheistic in essence. But distinct attempts were also made to justify the innumerable gods, old and new. Most of the ancient Vedic gods survived; but some of them, like Indra and Varuṇa, were reduced in stature; some, like Soma, departed entirely; some, like Yama, changed their character; some, like Prajāpati, were left untouched; some, like the five solar deities, became merged ultimately into one sun-god of the simplest and most direct form; while others, like Viṣṇu and Rudra, were raised and invested with a new glory. Neither does the word *Tri-mūrti* nor the trinitarian doctrine occur<sup>1</sup>; but Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva as the triad practically dominate the Epic, henotheistically as supreme deities in turn, polytheistically as co-ordinate deities and monotheistically as aspects of one supreme deity. It is not necessary to trace here the evolution of these great gods, nor

(*IA*, 1908, p. 252, and elsewhere) would take them; at best we can call them non-Brahmanist or non-orthodox. There could never have been any sense of sharp antithesis, as their easy ultimate 'Brahmanisation' would shew. Even Grierson's very dubious theory of the Kṣatriya origin of these cults, if admitted, can hardly be adduced as a proof of their alleged non-Brahmanical tendency. It may be conceded that the Nārāyaṇism or Bhāgavatism of the Epic was not strictly Brahmanic and could not have been evolved within the fold of orthodoxy; but, as E. W. Hopkins points out (*Ethics of India*, New Haven 1924, p. 172), it was not antagonistic and did not reject, as Buddhism did, Brahmanic authority and institution. Not only does the trend of the *Bhāgavat-gītā* shew this with respect to the Bhāgavata religion, but in the Nārāyaṇiya section of the Epic also the Nārāyaṇiya or Pañcarātra theology is said to have been uttered or received by orthodox sages. Conservatism is also indicated by the acceptance of Tapas, Yajña and other cardinal features of the Sravita religion. The very names of the sectarian gods, Rudra-Siva and Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, also show that they were moulded, in accordance with new ideas, out of the uncertain figures of old mythology and religion. Barth's presumption (*Religions of India*, Eng. trs., p. 166) of the foisting of sectarian gods on dummy Vedic divinities is a similar instance of one-sided generalisation. If the non-Brahmanic popular cults and gods were Brahmanised, the Brahmanic religion and its gods were in their turn entirely transformed by the popular cults, so that what issued in the end was as much Brahmanic as popular. It is in this form and character that we find sectarianism depicted in the *Mahābhārata*.

<sup>1</sup> Except in an interpolated passage (Bomb. ed. iii. 272. 47), which speaks of it as three *Avasthās* of Prajāpati (*tisro'vasthāḥ prajāpatēḥ*).

dilate upon the shifting character of epic theism ; a few words on the general epic conception of them will suffice. The grand-sire Brahmā, the four-faced lotus-born deity, absorbed in study and austerity, was the youngest god in the Vedic pantheon but oldest in the Epic. As he had his origin and basis in abstract speculation rather than in concrete nature-myth, he was a full-fledged deity only in later Vedic period ; in the Epic he is only the fatherly beneficent adviser to the gods. Whether there was any Brahmā-sect is very doubtful.<sup>1</sup> It is Viṣṇu and Śiva, more than Brahmā, who are alternately supreme ; and there is as much Śaivism in the Epic as Viṣṇuism. In the Vedic pantheon the two deities appear to occupy a secondary position, but they attain greatness in the Epic by syncretically absorbing a mass of Sondergötter and become composite figures shaped out of attributes derived from diverse sources. The Vedic Rudra, now transformed into the Epic Śiva, promulgates the Pāśupata doctrine and becomes the object of worship of the Pāśupata sect. But more than the ascetic and bizarre Śiva, the gracious and benignant Viṣṇu is the central figure of the epic religion. Hopkins<sup>2</sup> is right in stating that the ultimate emphasis is not on trinity, nor on multifariousness, but on unity ; and Viṣṇu is the vivid personification of that unity. But we shall see presently that, as Nārāyaṇa and the Bhagavat (Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva), coming from independent sources, became identified with the supreme Viṣṇu, the original but elusive Viṣṇuism of the Epic took more definite shapes as Nārāyaṇism and Bhāgavatism respectively. These cults may have been intrinsically connected, and in the Epic they appear completely merged ; but they are, as we shall see, distinguishable in origin and growth, as well as in doctrine and ceremonial.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A Brahma-snaha is spoken of in i. 164. 20 (=Crit. ed. i. 152. 18) ; but it is not clear what it exactly implies. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, however, Brahmā as Svayambhū appears more prominently (*Rām.* i. 18. 43 ; i. 22. 8 ; iii. 7. 13 ; iii. 51. 32 ; v. 13. 66).

<sup>2</sup> *Religions of India*, Boston 1895, p. 413.

<sup>3</sup> Pañcarātras and Bhāgavatas are not distinguished in later times by Śaṅkara (on *Vedānta-sūtra* ii. 2. 42-4) who condemns the systems as opposed to the Vedas, although the Epic recognises their orthodoxy, which Rāmānuja and Madhva, with their pro-Vaishnava leaning, maintain.—It should be noted that the name Sātvata (or Sāttvata) of a unit of the Yādava tribe is often used as a synonym for Bhāgavata without any

It should be noted in this connexion that the general epic religion is predominantly theistic and frankly dualistic. The Upaniṣadic doctrine of one impersonal, unmanifest, neuter Brahman is not repudiated ; it is utilised to explain the diversity of epic gods as different conditions of an unconditioned supreme being. The older polytheism was hard to die in popular belief ; but the epic faiths having been fundamentally monotheistic<sup>1</sup>, the traditional god-lore had to be justified by the Upaniṣadic teaching of the divine immānence of one supreme reality. Whether the object of adoration be Viṣṇu, Śiva, Nārāyaṇa, or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, or one of their numerous incarnations, they are recognised as the manifest forms of the unmanifest Brahman. Since the new theistic faiths required an object of personal love and worship, it is no wonder that the impersonal Brahman of the Upaniṣads is invested with a distinct personality and a distinct name, while the 'other gods' are also admitted as subordinate or co-ordinate beings, properly classed and given well-defined powers and functions. The prevailing attitude of religious adoration consists of an intimate realisation of the personal god in the individual consciousness through symbols (Pratīkas), manifestations (Prakāśas or Prādurbhāvas) and incarnations (Avatāras), in loving worship and devotion (Bhakti) and in complete surrender (Prapatti) to divine grace (Prasāda). Thus, we find all the features, which characterise much later sectarian faiths, already anticipated in the *Mahā-*

ethnic significance, as the Bhagavat or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa belonged to this sect. In the Epic, therefore, the Pañcarūtra system is often described as Sātvata Dharma framed in accordance with Sātvata rule (Sātvata Vidhi), implying identity of the Sātvatas or Bhāgavatas with the Nārāyaṇiyas or Pañcarūtrās. But this identity appears to have been artificially imposed.— In other parts of the Epic the 'Nārāyaṇas' appear as a tribe of cowherd who battle against Arjuna and Vāsudeva (vii. 18, 31; 31. 29; viii. 11. 17; ix. 2. 38, etc.) for they were the warriors offered by Kṛṣṇa to Duryodhana (v. 7. 18f). The Sātvata princes, like Sātyaki, had their Sātvata army who fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas. There is nothing to show that these Nārāyaṇas were the Ekāntins or Pañcarūtrās of the Nārāyaṇya section of the *Māla*.

<sup>1</sup> We have phases of perfunctory henotheism or opportunist monotheism as early as the *Rg-veda* but they afford no evidence of the real theistic attitude. The conception of Varuna represents perhaps the nearest approach to ethical and speculative monotheism of the Agni-Hiranyagarbha-Prajā-pati hymns.

*bhārata*. Like mediaeval sectarian faiths, it exalts Bhakti as the heart of worship. This mystic and emotional mood of devotionalism is given supremacy over mere moral sufficiency or intellectual conviction, but unlike what we have in most mediaeval faiths the attitude is more reflective than merely passionate. The Bhakti in the Epic in general is often explained by the analogy of the love of the wife for her husband ; but the analogy involves no erotic implication, and the ardent love and yearning of earlier devotionalism was never entirely divorced from intellectual satisfaction or moral earnestness.

### *The Epic Sects*

The *Mahābhārata*<sup>1</sup> is fully aware of sectarian worship, and distinctly recognises four prevalent sects. They are the Saura, Pāśupata, Pañcarātra (or *Nārāyaṇīya*) and Bhāgavata<sup>2</sup>. Mention is also made of two current systems of thought (*jñānāñī*), namely, the *Vedāranyaka* and the *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*. By *Vedāranyaka* is, of course, meant the traditional Vedic thought and practice which still survived, but which could not have been the prevailing religious attitude. Whether it had dwindled into a mere cult is uncertain ; but curiously enough, the Epic names Apāntaratamas, otherwise called *Pracīnagarbha*, as the original teacher of Vedicism. The general attitude of the Epic towards Vedic religion is not definite ; for while passages can be cited which glorify it, there are other passages which are unfavourable and even antagonistic. But the Vedic gods must have lost their old status and strength ; for the Epic (i. 30. 37 = Crit. ed. i. 26. 32) declares : "Withered are the garlands of the gods and their glory departed !" The *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*, on the other hand, occupies a prominent place and forms the philosophical background of epic thought. It permeates even distinctly sectarian teaching. While Kapila and his school were teachers of *Sāṃkhya*, the promulgator of the epic *Yoga* is not

<sup>1</sup> The epic use of the term Bhakti has been analysed by Hopkins in *JRAS*, 1911, p. 727f.

<sup>2</sup> Our references to the text are to the Bombay edition unless otherwise specified.

<sup>3</sup> xii. 349. 1, 64. The Bhāgavata is not mentioned here as a separate system, for it was regarded apparently as identical with the Pañcarātra ; while the Saura, also not mentioned here, was probably ignored as insignificant.

Patañjali but Hiranyagarbha and "no other", although Śiva is spoken of as the Yoga-lord (Yogādhyakṣa). Perhaps originally Sāṃkhya and Yoga were independent systems, but in the Epic they are often mentioned jointly (as also in *Śvetāśvatara* vi. 13) as if constituting a single doctrine and are sometimes declared to be identical; at least Sāṃkhya is taken to be the norm. The chief difference appears to be that while Yoga laid stress on practical discipline, Sāṃkhya on knowledge. The Yoga was perhaps more orthodox, but the Sāṃkhya was the philosophy of knowledge *par excellence*, which was devoid of belief in a supreme personal god (Nirīśvara), and which did not strictly adhere to traditional views. Partly in its metaphysics and certainly in its cosmology and psychology, the Epic accepts this older form of Sāṃkhya speculation; and the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, now ingeniously made theistic by postulating a principle beyond the Twenty-fifth, is expressly acknowledged as the basic thought in the Pāśupata, Pañcarātra and Bhāgavata faiths. Since old heterodoxy, like old orthodoxy, must have continued to develop on its own lines, we have stray references also to heretical views. The heretics were: the Nāstika or Negator, who was a dissenter from received opinion in regard to transcendental realities or to the authority of hallowed tradition; the Hetumat or Rationalist; the Pāṣānda or Reviler of the Veda; and Lokāyatika<sup>1</sup> or Naturalist. As the references are very meagre, it is difficult to determine the exact scope of the different types of heretical teaching; and it is uncertain whether the heretics formed any important group or sect.

#### *The Saura Sect*

Coming to the sects which are directly mentioned or dealt with in the Epic, the Sauras do not appear to have left much trace. They are known incidentally from only two references. In one of these passages (vii. 82. 16) it is said that in the camp of the Pāṇḍus there were "a thousand and eight others who were Sauras". In another context (ii. 138. 18) there is mention of a secret Veda of the Sun taught to Arvāvasu; but the passage is now known to be a Vulgate insertion into the text. There are also references to the Sun-god's connexion with the

<sup>1</sup> As Nilakantha's interpretation shows, the reference to the Lokāyatikas is doubtful (i. 70. 46 = Crit. ed. i. 64. 37).

Pañcarātra and the Bhāgavata sects. The Pañcarātras are said to have derived their doctrine from the Sun-god appearing as secondary recipient or promulgator in the form of Sūrya or Vivasvat (xii. 335. 19; 339. 119-20; 348. 50, etc); while the *Bhagavad-gītā* tells us (iv. 1-3) that the Bhāgavata doctrine was originally communicated to Vivasvat. The emancipated souls, again, are said to pass through the sun-door to Nārāyaṇa (xii. 344. 14f), while the *Bhagavad-gītā* (ix. 24) declares that those who die while the sun is in the Uttarāyaṇa go to the Brahman. These beliefs undoubtedly show the influence of solar myths or solar cult on Pañcarātra and Bhāgavatism; but they do not prove that these systems were derived from an original sun-worship. Although Viṣṇu, with whom Nārāyaṇa and the Bhagavat are identified, was originally in the *Rg-veda* a solar deity, Viṣṇu in the Epic is no longer an obvious Sun-god. In spite of Grierson's contention<sup>1</sup> to the contrary, the epic Viṣṇuism or Bhāgavatism cannot be regarded as a development of Sun-worship; and over it heliolatry does not appear to have any perceptible influence.<sup>2</sup> Devotion or Bhakti to the Sun-god is spoken of in one passage (iii. 285. 7f=Crit. ed. iii. 301. 7f), but this is in special connexion with the story of Karna. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Bomb. ed. vi. 105) the Āditya-hṛdaya hymn extols Sūrya and identifies him with all the great gods, but it is a late litany which is not found in the Bengal text edited by Gorresio.

### *Siva and the Pāśupata religion*

In the *Mahābhārata* the sect which believed in the worship of Rudra-Śiva appears to have flourished under the specific name of Pāśupata. In one passage (xii. 284. 195), Śiva as Maheśvara claims to have declared the Pāśupata religion, while in another passage (xii. 349. 67), the promulgator of this system is identified with Śiva, who is said to have revealed the Pāśupata philosophy (Jñāna). The *Rāmāyaṇa* knows Śiva under his many names and mythological exploits, but it does not

<sup>1</sup> *IA*, September 1908; in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ii, p. 540 (art. Bhakti-mārga).

<sup>2</sup> See S. K. De, Bhāgavatism and Sun-worship in *BSOS*, vi, 1931, p. 669 (Reprinted above p. 27).

connect him with the Pāśupata sect, nor conceive him, as the *Mahābhārata* does, as a phallic deity.<sup>1</sup>

The figure of Śiva is of bewildering complexity. Like Viṣṇu he did not possess in Vedic literature the greatness assigned to him in the Epic. It is not necessary to trace here how the Aryan (Vedic) "howling" god Rudra developed, presumably through non-Aryan admixture, into the composite Epic Śiva; but Rudra-Śiva is entirely a creation of mythology, there being no question of euhemerism in the conception, as there is in that of Nārāyaṇa or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. In the double form of Rudra-Śiva, he is both benevolent and malevolent, the object of love as well as fear. The Rg-vedic Rudra, though distinctly formidable, is not altogether devoid of beneficent attributes as the god of healing and lord of cattle. In the later Saṁhitās his importance increases; and the well-known Śatarudriya litany of the *Vājasaneyi-Saṁhitā* (xvi. 2. 49) already refers to his Ghorā and Śivā Tanu<sup>2</sup>, terrible and benignant aspect, which description the Epic accepts and amplifies.<sup>3</sup> In another epic passage (xiii. 14. 347-49) a distinction appears to have been made between Śiva and Rudra; for we are told that Śiva not only created Brahmā and Viṣṇu, respectively for the purpose of creation and preservation, but also Rudra as Kāla, which therefore becomes his devastating form. Originally lord of cattle (Paśupati) he becomes lord of all creatures, and almost all the exploits and names associated with him in Purāṇa mythology is already known to the Epic.<sup>4</sup> His war-like character is specially made prominent; he helps Arjuna with Pāśupata weapons and favours Aśvatthāman with a divine sword. Apart from the Śatarudriya hymns in the Droṇa and Anuśāsana Parvans, which recite and explain his various epithets,<sup>5</sup> some chapters of the Śānti-parvan describe the power

<sup>1</sup> Except in one doubtful passage in the *Uttara-kāṇḍa* (Bomb. ed. vii. 31. 40-43) where Rāvaṇa is spoken of as having worshipped Śiva in the Linga-form on the banks of the Narmadā.

<sup>2</sup> Also referred to in *Svetāśvatara Up.* iii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Bomb. ed. vii. 202. 40-42 = Crit. ed. vii. 173. 95-96.

<sup>4</sup> E. W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, Strassburg 1915, p. 219f.

<sup>5</sup> In the Yajur-vedic Śatarudriya hymn (*Vāj. Saṁ.* xvii) the epithets Rudra, Bhava, Sarva, Ugra, Paśupati, Nilagrīva, Sītikāṇṭha, Nilakōṭha, Giriśa, Saṁbhū, Kapardin and Śiva already occur. He is described as a patron of robbers, thieves and cheats; hence probably his name Hara-

and generosity of this powerful and generous god. The Kurus were probably Śiva-worshippers; but even Kṛṣṇa, not to speak of Arjuna, is made more than once to recite his glory and worship him; while laudation of Viṣṇu appears freely in the mouth of Śiva. It seems that there was as yet not much antagonism between the sects of Śiva and Viṣṇu; each sect apparently believed in the supremacy of its own god, but neither decried the other.<sup>1</sup> Like the Pañcarātra and Bhāgavata sects, the Pāśupata was not in the strict sense orthodox; and it is declared that the Pāśupata faith, though agreeing in some cases, was contrary to what was prescribed by the Varnāśrama creed.

But what is more important to note is that the Epic Śiva is conceived for the first time as a phallic god of procreation; and Phallus(Liṅga)-worship, with its natural co-adjustor of extreme austerity, is definitely connected with him and recommended as the best form of Śiva-worship<sup>2</sup>. Deeply rooted in the popular religious conscience, the Liṅga is, of course, presented as a philosophical symbol, and is never associated with any passion-element; but it is at the same time presented here as a definite symbol of procreation or fertility. In a legend recorded in the *Anuśāsana Parvan* (xiii. 14-17) the cult is said to have been propagated by the sage Upamanyu, who learnt it from his mother (here unnamed) and taught it to Kṛṣṇa, when Kṛṣṇa went to his hermitage in the Himalayas. The occasion was Kṛṣṇa's desire to obtain a son by Jāmbavatī, which he attained by worshipping, under instruction of the

Here and in later *Saṃhitās* he acquires already most of his strange and outlandish features and his connexion with mountains, cemeteries and serpents. Some of the names of Rudra are given in *Vāj. Sāh.* xxxix. 8 and *Satapatha Br.* 1. 7. 3. 8 as designating forms of Agni. This interchange of names is explicable if we regard Rudra as the god of storm and lightning.

<sup>1</sup> The passage (iii. 39. 76) which speaks of the dualism of Hari-Rudra is now known to be an interpolation. There is, however, an account (xii. 342) of a fight between Rudra and Nara-Nārāyaṇa resulting in the latter's victory!

<sup>2</sup> *Mbh.* vii. 201. 92-93, 96—*Crit. ed.* vii. 172. 86-87, 90; vii. 202. 40—*Crit. ed.* vii. 173. 98; xiii. 14. 27-35; xiii. 161, 16. The Poona Critical Edition of the Epic shews that Hopkins was not correct in his conjecture that these passages were pure interpolations which should be disregarded. If they are additions, they must have got into the text before our present manuscript tradition begins; for both the Northern and Southern Recensions include them.

sage, not the anthropomorphic image, but the Liṅga-form of Śiva. This is declared to be the best way of worshipping the deity. But it is noteworthy that the god himself appears both to Upamanyu and to Kṛṣṇa, not as the Liṅga but in his usual anthropomorphic form, seated on a great bull and accompanied by his consort Umā. In other words, the Liṅga was merely a symbol of worship. The sage Upamanyu, however, inculcates, not the cult of the Liṅga alone, but the worship of the joint symbols of the Liṅga of Śiva and the Yoni of Devī, expressly as the synthetic expression of the male and female principles of life. As such Śiva and Umā often appear as an androgynous deity, both male and female. Although Upamanyu himself did not worship Śiva for the boon of offspring, there are other references in the *Mahābhārata* to Śiva as a god of procreation or fertility worshipped mainly for the boon of a son; as for instance, by Drupada (v. 188. 3=Crit. ed. v. 189. 3) and Somadatta (vii. 144. 15=Crit. ed. vii. 119. 15); but in both these cases it is not mentioned whether he was worshipped in the Liṅga-form. In another context, in the Sauptika Parvan (x. 17), we are told how Rudra detached his Liṅga from his body. Requested by Brahmā to create Prajā, Śiva entered the primeval waters, but remained there so long that Brahmā thought that the god had disappeared, and himself created beings with the help of other agencies. Then Śiva emerged from the waters; but finding that the work assigned to him had already been accomplished by others, he discarded in anger his Liṅga or procreative organ from his body, and returned to Mūjavat mountains for practising austerities.

It is necessary to consider the significance of these myths and legends which describe the emergence of the Liṅga-cult in the Epic, for there is hardly any reference to this strange system of worship in Vedic literature. The Śiśna-devas mentioned in two doubtful passages of the *Rg-veda* (vii. 21. 5; x. 99. 3) may or may not have been phallus-worshippers; but there is no definite mention anywhere of the ritual use of phallus; and even presuming that the cult existed, the Rg-vedic reference shows that it was certainly disfavoured. How then did the cult grow and become prominent in Epic?

Several facts stand out from the description given above of the Pāśupata religion:

(1) While other parts of the Epic attribute to Siva destructive rather than productive energy, the passages which connect him with the Linga-cult represent him chiefly as a phallic god of fertility. This is entirely a departure from the notion of the Vedic Rudra, who is destructive without any trace of having been a god of procreation, much less connected with a phallic cult. Also his orgiastic traits, not found in the Vedic, are developed in the Epic.

(2) Rudra, however, is not an ithyphallic deity in the Epic; that is to say, he is not represented (as some Egyptian deities, for instance, are) with exaggerated sexual organs. It is true that certain epithets like Mahāsepha (xiii. 14. 61) and Mahāliṅga (xiii. 7. 83) are applied to him, but it is possible to interpret these terms as Liṅga which is great, and not as possessing a large Liṅga<sup>1</sup>. His nudity is not priapic but indicative of extreme austerity. But what is important to note is that he appears to his devotees throughout in his anthropomorphic form, and never as embodied Liṅga; a fact which perhaps indicates that Liṅga-worship was as yet loosely associated with Siva-worship.

(3) The Epic Siva also appears, unlike the Vedic Rudra, as an androgynous deity, half male and half female, granting offspring. All creatures bear male or female sign, *pūnliṅga* and *stṛliṅga*, *dve tanū*; and as such they belong to Siva and his female part Umā (xiii. 14. 33-35). The epic liṅga-cult is represented, therefore, as worship of the joint or synthetic symbol (*liṅgam bhagāñkitam*) of the male and female principles. It is a form of the cult which is unknown elsewhere. But the cosmogonic motif of a bisexual or androgynous *Urwesen* is, of course, very old. It has been presumed<sup>2</sup> in the original notion of the Rg-Vedic twins, Yama and Yami. It is more clearly seen in a *Kāñhaka* passage<sup>3</sup> where Prajāpati is said to have assumed a bisexual form because he wanted to create and did not have any other being for pairing; while

<sup>1</sup> His retinues (Pāriśadas), however, have sexual deformities, *pralambodara-mekhana* (ix. 45. 97) and *bṛhac-cheplāda-pindika* (x. 7. 39), but this is perhaps to intensify their gruesome and ghoalish appearance.

<sup>2</sup> R. N. Dandekar, Yama in the Veda in *B. C. Law Volume* i, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> *Prajāpatir voi prajāḥ sisekṣamāṇaḥ sa devīlyāḥ mithunash nāvin-  
data. sa etad rupash kṛtvāṅguṣṭhenātmānam samabhavat. tataḥ prajā  
asrjata* (xiii. 7).

*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*<sup>1</sup> tells us that the Ātmān as the original Puruṣa was a bisexual being without enjoyment before he divided himself into man and woman, and multiplied.

(4) The story of Śiva's discarding his Liṅga is meant to indicate that the detached Phallus as such came to be worshipped as this supreme symbol ; and it replaced in course of time his anthropomorphic image which, however, is not yet superseded in the Epic.<sup>2</sup> Śiva is said to be the best god because other gods worship his Liṅga, and the Liṅga of no other god is so worshipped. It is, therefore, recommended as the best form of Śiva-worship. The epithets Cāru-liṅga, Sthira-liṅga, Urdhva-liṅga (erect, upright, because of austerity), Liṅgādhyakṣa and Śva-liṅgāvirbhūta (revealed by his own Liṅga) are, therefore, intelligible. The story of the detached Liṅga, as well as the general character of Śiva in other parts of the Epic where he is not connected with Liṅga-worship, would indicate that the Liṅga-symbol, of which worship is especially enjoined in these isolated episodes only, had not yet completely overshadowed the anthropomorphic appearance of the deity, and that there was in all probability an engraving of the phallic cult, coming from an independent source, on the old Rudra-Śiva idea conceived anew.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ātmavedam agra deit puruṣavidhaḥ . . . . sa vai naiva reme . . . sa dvitīyam aicchat. sa haitārān dea yathā stripumāṁsau saṁparīṣvaktou. sa imam evātmānam dvēdhpātayat patiś ca pati cābhavatām . . . tām samabhārat. tato manuṣyā ajāyanta (i. 4).

<sup>2</sup> In Indian temples today we hardly find the image of Śiva as such, having been almost entirely superseded by the Liṅga.—It is possible that the Bull-cult was early associated with the phallic Śiva-cult because the bull (e.g. the Vedic Vṛṣan) was already a symbol of masculinity and procreation.

<sup>3</sup> Regarding origin of the Liṅgas, two different traditions are distinguishable in the later Purāṇas. The one account (*Bṛhad-dharma*, Madhya-Khaṇḍa; *Saura* ch. 69; *Skanda*, Nāgara-khaṇḍa; *Padma*, Śrīti-khaṇḍa; *Vāmana*) more or less follows the Epic story that Śiva separated the Liṅga from his own person, either voluntarily or through the curse of some sages ; but there is another significant account (*Vāyu*, also *Saura* ch. 14, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Kṛma*, *Śiva* and *Liṅga*) in which the Liṅga appears independently as a blazing pillar of cosmic fire, somewhat in the manner of the Vedic Skambha, without being described as a discarded limb of Śiva. The second account implies that the Liṅga was perhaps originally an independent idea.

From all these considerations it would seem that the phallic cult, of which there is hardly any definite trace in Vedic literature, must have assumed importance enough in the post-Vedic period to be directly associated with the Vedic Rudra (of whom there might or might not have existed any distinct cult), with the result that the god of destruction becomes, for the first time in the Epic, a god of procreation. The process was not yet complete in the *Mahābhārata*, but it had advanced far enough to insist upon the Linga-symbol as the most important feature of the Pāśupata religion of the Epic Śiva, although he is the historical descendant of the Vedic Rudra. The origin of the phallic cult in India is obscure, this Epic account being the earliest tangible literary evidence. The cult might have been autochthonous, but neither in Vedic nor in Epic literature we hear of any aboriginal tribe<sup>1</sup> who were distinguished by the use of the Linga-emblem and who might have been lent phallicism to the traditional religion. The northern origin of the cult is probable, for not only Śiva is a god of the North and lives in the northern (especially Müjavat) mountains, but northern Kāmboja affinities of Upamanyu, the epic promulgator of the cult, are indicated.<sup>2</sup> This, of course, does not rule out, but really points

<sup>1</sup> The theory which finds the ancestors of Rudra-Śiva worshippers in the Vrātyas, whose initiation into the orthodox fold forms a well-known Vedic ceremony, appears plausible but lacks confirmation. Hopkins (*Epic Mythology*, p. 231, n. 2) is undoubtedly right in pointing out that the Epic does not encourage such vagaries as the strange rites and weird appearance of the Vrātyas indicate, and that in the *Māhā*, the Vrātyas are simply outlawed sinners, while the Rudra-Śiva worshippers are princes and aristocrats. Besides, there is no reference anywhere to the prevalence of the phallic cult among the Vrātyas, who were not aborigines but non-Vedic Aryans.

<sup>2</sup> The question of provenance is discussed by Nanimadhab Chaudhuri in his review of the Linga Worship in the *Mahābhārata* in *IHQ*, xxiv, 1948, p. 290-92. The story that Upamanyu's unnamed mother first revealed the cult to her son need not imply that the cult arose in a matriarchal society. On Linga-cult generally see A. P. Karmarkar, The Linga Cult in Ancient India in *B. C. Law Volume*, i, pp. 456-68.—The phallic cult was, of course, known in Babylonia, Egypt and Greece. Whether it existed among the chalcolithic Indus Valley people is uncertain (Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and Indus Valley Civilisation*, i, pp. 59, 60-61).

to, the possibility that the cult might have been a north-western exotic of extraneous origin. Przyluski, however, points out<sup>1</sup> that the word *Liṅga* itself is not Indo-Aryan but Austro-Asiatic, and as such it might have been a non-Aryan loan word of *Kol-Mundā* origin. But whatever may have been the history of the *Liṅga*-cult, its appearance is late; it was certainly not a trait of the Vedic religion, and was never connected with *Rudra-Śiva* in its earlier stages.

Exactly how and when the phallic cult became associated with *Rudra-Śiva* is not known; but it is possible that the transformation of the Vedic *Rudra* into the Epic *Śiva* by the ardent imagination of popular faiths helped mutual assimilation, if it can be definitely ascertained that the *Liṅga*-cult had been in the meantime a widespread popular cult. It has been suggested<sup>2</sup> that the assimilation was effected through a previous association of the *Rudra*-cult with the more widely diffused cult of the Mother-goddess. While the notion of the Mother-goddess was admittedly a universal East-Asian concept of great antiquity, it is not known whether there was a definite *Rudra*-cult, although *Rudra* may have been hymned and extolled in the *Yajur-veda*. The association is possible, but it is not explained how it was accomplished. The Vedic *Rudra* has no well-known consort except the conventional *Rudrāṇī*, unless *Pr̥ṣṇī* (interpreted as 'mottled cloud') be regarded as such from the description of the *Maruts*, his offsprings, as *pr̥ṣṇī-mātarāḥ*. The meaning of the epithet *Tryambaka* 'having three mothers', already applied to him in the Vedic texts<sup>3</sup>, is uncertain.<sup>4</sup> *Ambikā* 'mother', one of the post-Vedic names of *Rudra*'s wife, is mentioned for the first time in the *Vājasaneyi-Saṅhitā* (iii. 57), but she appears there not as *Rudra*'s wife but as his sister; while *Umā* *Haimavatī*, one of the regular names of *Śiva*'s wife, appears first in the *Kena*

<sup>1</sup> In *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian*, trs. P. C. Bagchi, Calcutta University, pp. 15, 41.

<sup>2</sup> Nanimadhab Chaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 287f; also cf. *IO*, viii, 1941-42, p. 169. The curious myth of *Śiva* as a child in the lap of *Umā* (vii. 202. 84—*Crit. ed.* vii. 173. 59; cf. xiii. 160. 32) cannot signify any implication of a cult of the Mother-goddess.

<sup>3</sup> *VdJ. San.* iii. 58; *Satapatha Br.* xi. 6. 2. 9; cf. *Rg-v.* vii. 59. 12.

<sup>4</sup> See Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 149; cf. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, Strasburg 1897, p. 74.

*Upaniṣad* (iii. 12), although it is not clear whether Śiva's wife is meant in this passage.

In the Epic the consort of Śiva is called generally Devī, Umā and Pārvatī<sup>1</sup>, but she gains importance, not by herself as the centre of an alleged mother-goddess cult, but from her association with Śiva. The worship of the Yoni-symbol of Devī is mentioned, but only in connection with the Liṅga-worship of Śiva, and not by itself as such. The only passages in which she is independently exalted are the two Durgā-hymns occurring respectively in the Virāṭa and Bhiṣma Parvans; but from the Poona Critical Edition of the text they are now definitely known to be Vulgate insertions. Having taken them as genuine, R. G. Bhandarkar<sup>2</sup> was misled into thinking that they furnished evidence of Śakti-worship in the Epic, but this view is no longer tenable. The Śakti-worship may have been a special development of Śaiva sectarianism but Śiva's consort Umā (probably=Ammā 'mother')<sup>3</sup> is never called Śakti<sup>4</sup> in the Epic, and she never overshadows him as an independent goddess. It is indeed doubtful if the Śākta, as a separate sect or cult, had come into prominence; at least the Tāntric implications of Śakti-worship appears to have been unknown to the Epic, as it is to the Vedic literature.

Of the specific teaching of the epic Pāśupatas nothing more definite is available. The system is said to have been framed reasonably out of the Veda (with its six Āngas) and the Sāṅkyha-Yoga (*vedāt sad-āngād tuddhṛtya sāṅkhyayogāc ca yukitah*, xii. 284. 92f), and that it agrees occasionally, but generally goes contrary to the Varnāśrama Dharma (*varṇā-*

<sup>1</sup> Kālidāsa states (*Kumāra* i. 26) that Pārvatī was an earlier name than Umā. It is mentioned in the *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*. x. 1. 8; but this part of the work (the fourth Prapāṭhaka), which is also known as the *Mahānārāyaṇa-Upaniṣad* and which refers to many late sectarian gods, is described as a Khila or supplement of much later origin.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 142f. S. Radhakrishnan (*Indian Philosophy*, i, p. 487) follows this view without question.

<sup>3</sup> The fanciful etymology *u-mā* 'O don't', suggested by Kālidāsa (*Kumāra* i. 26) on the legend that her mother dissuaded her from the path of austerity, occurs in the supplementary *Hari-vedāśa*. Kālidāsa, himself a votary of Śiva, mentions Śiva as an androgynous deity but nowhere refers to his worship in the Liṅga-form.

<sup>4</sup> Except in one passage in the Southern Recension (Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, pp. 225-26).

*śrama-kytaṁ dharmaṁ vīparitam् kvaicit samam).* The reference to Sāṁkhya-Yoga is not surprising; for the epic Sāṁkhya-Yoga was the dominating philosophy, which was common property of epic sectarian faiths. Śiva himself is said to be Sāṁkhya-yogārthada, as well as a Yoga-lord (Yogādhyakṣa); while Nārāyaṇa of the Pañcarātras is said to be the Niṣṭhā or object of worship of Sāṁkhya-Yoga, which is described as *nārāyaṇa-para*.<sup>1</sup> This proto-Sāṁkhya-Yoga was apparently a curious medley not only of two divergent systems but also of unrelated ideas from other sources; in fact, it was a loose but convenient term to describe the confused philosophical thought of the Epic. It is not, as we have said above, classical Sāṁkhya-Yoga; for the epic Sāṁkhya is made theistic by postulating a Twenty-fifth principle, called Iṣvara, added to the original Twenty-four of Sāṁkhya; while the more orthodox Yoga, accepts spiritual aloofness (Kevalatva) as the goal. Whatever may have been the philosophical background, it is probable that the Pāśupata, like the Pañcarātra and Bhāgavāta faiths, emphasised emotional realisation more than mere knowledge; for it is declared (xiii. 14. 198) that the system was freed from logical disputation (*hetuvādair vinirmuktam*).<sup>2</sup>

### *Viṣṇu and Viṣṇuism*

We now turn to the religion of Viṣṇu which constitutes the leading motive of the Epic. It is characterised by various

<sup>1</sup> The passages which indicate the close relation of the epic Sāṁkhya-Yoga to Pañcarātra are numerous and definite. The Pañcarātra, like the Pāśupata, is expressly said to be *sāṁkhya-yoga-kyta* (xii. 339. 111; 351. 23), while Sāṁkhya-Yoga and Sāṁkhya-mūrti are Nārada's epithets of Nārāyaṇa, who is called Sāṁkhya-Yoga-nidhi in xii. 347. 38. Nārāyaṇa identifies himself with Kapila (xii. 339. 68), while Pañcarāśika, who is described as a Kāpileya sage, is also called Pañcarātra-viśvārada, a teacher of the Pañcarātra system, although his scheme is not the same. The *Bhagavad-gītā* also refers to Sāṁkhya-Yoga.

<sup>2</sup> The account is meagre in the Epic. All our knowledge of the Pāśupata doctrine is derived from much later works. The *Vidyu-purāṇa* which reproduces (xxx. 293-96) *Mbh.* xii. 284. 92-95, gives an account (x. 69-94) of five principles taught by Maheśvara, namely, Prāṇayama, Dhyāna, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇī and Smarāṇa, which approximate the system more to Yoga. Śaṅkara in his *Brahmasaṅgraha-bhāṣya* (ii. 2. 37) also informs us that Pāśupati revealed five topics, which are: Kārya, Kāraṇa, Yoga, Vidhi and Daṅkhānta. It would be anachronistic, however, to read these views into the *Mahābhārata*.

forms and names. In the Epic as a whole it is faith in Viṣṇu as the supreme deity, although the special appellation Vaiṣṇava is hardly yet known. But in some of the important sections of the Epic it is differently explained and designated. It is called the religion of the Bhāgavatas, the worshippers of the Bhagavat Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, its text-book being the *Bhagavad-gītā* imbedded in the Bhāṣma-parvan. In the mythical Nārāyaṇīya section of the Sānti-parvan (xii. 334-51), the supreme god is named Nārāyaṇa, and the religious teaching is known as the faith of the Nārāyaṇīyas or Ekāntins (Ekāntadharma); it is also called Pañcarātra in the text. Each of these names comes from an independent source and possesses a history behind it; and it is obvious that the cults associated with them were originally different, but they merged ultimately in the epic religion of Viṣṇu. Thus, the Viṣṇuite as a sect or as indicating a definite form of worship hardly exists, and the sectarian term Vaiṣṇava is not employed. In other words, Viṣṇuism<sup>1</sup> as a sectarian doctrine is not found in an isolated and definite form; Viṣṇuism as a general attitude pervades the whole Epic in an ever-shifting and illusive manner. It becomes distinctive and full-blooded when it is identified with the definitive Nārāyaṇīya or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa worship.

Viṣṇu possesses a fairly long history which gives him, as a deity, different values for mythology, ritualism, philosophy and religion. In the Epic we can hardly recognise his original Rg-vedic character of a solar deity, although he retains a distant echo of some of his solar myths, epithets and attributes. The epic religion, of which he is the centre, is not in any way related to sun-worship. He is also not the impersonal Brāhmaṇa principle of Sacrifice, although the idea still lingers in his connection with sacrificial rites. Nor, again, is he the temporary embodiment of the metaphysical Brahman of the Upaniṣad, although philosophically his unmanifest and unconditioned being is acknowledged. In spite of multifarious legendary and theological embellishments, which give him ever-changing forms and mystical identifications, his personality in the Epic as the supreme personal god of a popular faith is vivid. Although conceived as the ultimate philosophical principle, he is yet not a philosophical abstraction,

<sup>1</sup> On Viṣṇu and Viṣṇuism, see *IHQ*, vii, 1931, pp. 101-16.

but a loving and loveable deity, powerful yet benevolent, who is the centre of personal devotion and worship. Externalisation of the philosophical and religious ideas of the complex mass of Epic myths, legends and sentiments, the externalisation of the philosophical and religious ideas of the Epic, the supreme unifying fact of its divergent and bizarre faiths and beliefs. As such, he is the centre of gravity towards which the various forms of the devotional Bhakti conception of the new religion move; and in all the systems he is declared to be the *Niṣṭhā* (basis or end). Viṣṇu, therefore, should be understood primarily in terms of this large and mystic feeling of religious devotion in an epic setting. As the most interesting phases of this feeling, however, occur in Viṣṇu's absorption of Nārāyaṇa and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa we now turn our attention to them.

#### *Nārāyaṇa and the Pañcarātra worship*

Nārāyaṇa is not such an ancient god as Viṣṇu; but his origin and early history is somewhat obscure.<sup>1</sup> He is mentioned for the first time, not distinctly as a deity, but as *Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa* in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (xii. 3. 4; xiii 6. 1. 1)<sup>2</sup>. We are told that under the instruction of Prajāpati, who is the impersonal cosmic principle in Brāhmaṇa literature he performed a Pañcarātra *Sattra* or sacrifice lasting over five nights, and became omnipresent and supreme. This sacrificial ritual is designated *Puruṣa-medha* or immolation of the *Puruṣa*. It refers apparently to the tremendous symbolical sacrifice, described in the famous *Puruṣa-hymn* of the *Rg-veda* (x. 90) as consisting of the mystical immolation of the

<sup>1</sup> For an exhaustive and excellent exposition, here utilised, see Mrinal Dasgupta in *IHQ*, vii, 1931, pp. 346-58, 655-79; viii, 1932, pp. 64-84, where full references to the text and critical literature will be found. Also G. A. Grierson, The Nārāyaṇya and the Bhāgavatas in *IA*, September 1908, where an English translation of some portions of the relevant Epic text will be found. Nanimadhab Chaudhuri, Some Aspects of the Worship of Nārāyaṇa in *IHQ*, xx, 1944, pp. 275-84, does not add much useful information.

<sup>2</sup> Nārāyaṇa is also mentioned in the *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*, x. 1. 6; but this section (the fourth *Prapāthaka*), also known as the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, is regarded as a *Khila* or supplement. See above p. 75 footnote 1. In *Maitrīyaśāṅkhīśa* (ii. 9) Nārāyaṇa is mentioned as Viṣṇu and Keśava, but this passage, also naming some other later deities, has been similarly regarded as an obvious interpolation.

Cosmic Man or Puruṣa for the purpose of creation. Hence arose probably the composite name Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa. The Brāhmaṇa itself (xiii. 6. 2. 12) refers to the Ṛg-vedic hymn, and alludes to a tradition that the sage Nārāyaṇa was the author of the hymn, which came to be known as his litany.

This cosmic Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa tradition of the Brāhmaṇa appears to survive in the account given in this Epic, where not only the Puruṣa hymn is referred to (xii. 350. 5), but he is also described (xii. 338. 4; 339. 6f) as the Puruṣa,<sup>1</sup> Puruṣottama and Mahāpuruṣa, having (after the Ṛg-vedic hymn) a thousand heads, thousand eyes and thousand arms and feet, with the addition that he is golden in colour,—a phrase which is Vedic but which is specifically applied by some Upaniṣads to the supreme Puruṣa who shines beyond darkness. This early identification of Nārāyaṇa with the Primeval Man possibly stands behind the puzzling etymology of the name itself, which literally signifies Man, as also behind that of his mysterious double, Nara.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that Rudra-Siva is called Puruṣa in *Sṛeṣṭāśvatarā Up.* iii. 14, which quotes the Puruṣa-hymn. In post-Brahmaṇic literature the Puruṣa idea, starting from the Ṛg-veda, appears to have been established enough to be applied to all great gods indiscriminately. It is already a hackneyed expression in the Upaniṣads.

<sup>2</sup> The origin and history of this association of Nara and Nārāyaṇa cannot be traced in the earlier train of thought. We are told that Nārāyaṇa, an ancient sage, evolved by austerities Nara as his double; but it is not Nara, who is otherwise unknown as a god, but Nārāyaṇa who figures chiefly as a god. Apart from the obvious eponymous process, or the Vedic idea of pairing deities, or even the much earlier myth of primeval twins (none of which conjectures is convincing), the process of duplication is frankly obscure. Both Nara and Nārāyaṇa mean 'man or descendant of man'. The etymology is also easy that Nārāyaṇa is the goal or resting place (*anyana*) of man (*nara*). The conception, again, of primeval waters, which goes back to the Ṛg-veda, is also connected by the obviously fanciful derivation of the word, repeated in the Puruṣas, that Nārāyaṇa has the waters as his resting place or he is the resting place (*anyana*) of waters (*nara*). But all this does not explain Nara or the necessity of a double. R. G. Bhandarkar (*op. cit.*, sec. 34) gives the somewhat artificial explanation, worthy of old commentators, that the origin of the idea of Nara and Nārāyaṇa is to be sought in the Upaniṣadic fable of two birds, dwelling in the same tree, the one looking on and the other eating the fruits thereof. But the analogy does not apply, for Nārāyaṇa is not described, either literally or figuratively, as merely looking on and

In the Epic the identification of Nārāyaṇa as the supreme god with Viṣṇu and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa (and as a corollary with every great god) is complete, although the process of identification is not clear. A second tradition, however, is recorded that Nārāyaṇa was originally a legendary sage, deified or divine, who created out of himself Nara as his double, and practised austerities at Badarī in dual form. But here also both of them are mentioned as Pūrva-devas or ancient gods. To Nārada's question (xii. 334. 25f) as to whom they could be worshipping, Nārāyaṇa informs his amazed enquirer that he was worshipping his own original form (Prakṛti), the all-pervading and eternal, who embraced both the existent and the non-existent. After this philosophical conversation, Nārada is permitted to go and see the original form of Nārāyaṇa at this mythical god-land, the mysterious Śvetadvīpa, surrounded by the Milk Ocean. Whatever may be the value of this extremely mythical account, it is possible that it preserves the tradition of Nārāyaṇa as an ancient legendary sage, perhaps the same sage of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇā*, who was traditionally regarded as the author of the Rg-vedic Puruṣa-hymn.

This composite origin of the epic Nārāyaṇa is interesting as affording a striking instance of the moulding of a popular personal god out of ancient figures of myth and speculation. On the one hand, we have the euhemeristic tradition that Nārāyaṇa was originally a deified or divine saint; on the other, the old symbolical-ritualistic idea of Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa, connected with the principle of creation, contributes to make the conception complete. In the Epic he is, of course, identified with the mythical Viṣṇu and the more human Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, but he appears also as the promulgator of a devotional religion, which seems to have had a tradition independent of Viṣṇuism and Bhāgavatism.

Nara as enjoying the fruits. It is possible that the duplication arose from the speculative necessity of frequent epic identification of Nara and Nārāyaṇa with Arjuna and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa respectively as inseparable friends and associates; for not only duplication but also strange quadruplication is mentioned, in the Kṛta age, of the one original form of Nārāyaṇa into Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Hari and Kṛṣṇa as the four sons of Dharmā (xii. 334. 9). The four forms presumably reappeared as the four Vyūhas of the cult.

*The Nārāyaṇīya Episode*

A somewhat confused and mythical account of the religion is given in the Nārāyaṇīya episode of the Epic (xii. 334-51), where it is also called the Pañcarātra system (xii. 339. 112).<sup>1</sup> On the origin of this name various strange etymologies and ingenious explanations have been given. The suggestion is tempting that the word Pañcarātra connects itself with the Pañcarātra Sattrā of the Brāhmaṇic Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa. F. Otto Schrader, who made a special study of later Pañcarātra Āgamas<sup>2</sup>, seems to support this suggestion; but he would give a more doctrinal trend to the interpretation by connecting it, chiefly on the authority of much later texts, with one of the central dogmas of the cult, namely, the theory of Manifestation, which explains the Pañcarātra Sattrā mystically as the fivefold appearance of the deity in his Para, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmin and Arcā forms. The dogma, no doubt, prevailed in the later history of the cult, but the Epic text does not confirm it. Another explanation is given, on the authority of the late and apocryphal *Nārada-Pañcarātra*, that the term Pañcarātra refers to the five (Pañca) principal topics of knowledge (Rātra) taught by the faith, namely, Reality (Tattva), Liberation (Mokṣa), Devotion (Bhakti), Yoga (Yaugika) and Sense-objects (Vaiṣayika). Though more sensible, the explanation is obviously an after-thought.

As the whole system is given in the Epic, not as a system but as a floating mass of myth and tradition, it is difficult to trace its definite historical origin. Seven different appearances and disappearances of the doctrine at the birth and end of each Brahmā, and different modes of revelation, are distinguished. Two distinct accounts of its promulgation and transmission, however, are interesting. We have at first (xii. 335) the story of communication of the doctrine to seven Citra-śikhandin sages and their compilation of an extensive scripture. These sages are the well-known mind-born sons of Brahmā, namely,

<sup>1</sup> The word designates the system (xii. 218. 11; 335. 25; 349. 68, 72), which is counted among the four or five current schools of thought in the Epic in xii. 349. 1. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Introduction to Pañcarātra*, Adyar (Madras) 1916, pp. 24f. Other strange etymologies have been suggested; see A. Govindacharya Svamin in *JRAS*, 1911, p. 940f.

Marīci, Atri, Āṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha. By severe austerities for a divine thousand years, they were possessed by Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, at the direction of Nārāyaṇa himself, and became the receptacles of the Śāstra, which they composed in a hundred thousand excellent Ślokas and which received the approval of the invisible Nārāyaṇa within themselves. It was authoritatively promulgated by Manu Svāyambhuva, who was with them, and learnt by Uśanas and Bṛhaspati. King Uparicara-Vasu, who was a devotee of Nārāyaṇa, received it from his preceptor Bṛhaspati, but after Vasu the doctrine disappeared. The second account (xii. 339. 108f) speaks of Nārada's visit to Śvetadvīpa, the mythical abode of Nārāyaṇa, and direct revelation of the doctrine (here called Pañcarātra) to him by the deity himself, along with its mysteries and compendiums, and its subsequent traditional transmission. There is yet a third account (xii. 336. 20f) of another expedition, partly fruitless, to Śvetadvīpa by three ascetics, Ekata Dvita and Trita,—which is really the Nārāyaṇīya version of a Rg-vedic legend with a different motif. They obtained a dazzling vision of the inaccessible paradise of Nārāyaṇa and his resplendent devotees, but the sight of the god himself was denied to them, because they did not possess, in spite of their austerities, the requisite qualification of Bhakti.

These highly fabulous stories have little value for sober history, but perhaps they embody a current tradition of the high antiquity of the doctrine. Such legendary accounts of divine origin and promulgation by mythical sages are often fabricated piously where the actual origin and mode of transmission are forgotten. Possibly the faith had no founder of undoubted historicity whose memory survived, although all the accounts agree in assigning the honour to a mysterious sage Nārāyaṇa by raising him to the dignity of the supreme deity of the cult. They also indicate that the cult did not have an unbroken existence, and that its original extensive scripture was lost. These are indeed meagre indications; but the myths and legends have an important bearing on culture-history, even if they furnish dubious material for factual history. They point to the not unlikely conclusion that the Nārāyaṇīya faith could not have been a deliberate philosophical or historical religion, originating from a definite founder, but that it must

have grown naturally out of floating myths and legends on which popular faiths feed and grow. The accession of philosophical ideas, derived chiefly from hieratic sources, must have been a gradual process. On the speculative side, there is indeed a strange medley, characteristic of the Epic, of varied and conflicting ideas; but it was probably meant to furnish an imposing orthodox background. It could not have formed the essence of the fervid devotional feeling of popular origin on which the faith chiefly bases itself. The complex, confusing and sometimes grotesque parapharnelia of mythological fancy, therefore, form a part and parcel of its popular theology, blended as it is with extraneous, but hardly fitting, philosophical ideas. There is indeed a distinct anxiety to connect the faith with orthodox gods and saints, doctrine and ceremonial; but there cannot be much doubt that it could not have evolved from orthodox speculation, but that it received its original impetus from popular fancy and feeling.

It is also noteworthy that the faith of the *Nārāyaṇiyas*, though divergent, is repeatedly declared to be identical with that of the *Sātvatas* or *Bhāgavatas*. It is said to have been given in a compendious form in the *Harigītās* (xii. 346. 10-11; 348. 53). What the *Hari-gītās* (in plural number) are is not clear; but in one passage (xii. 348. 8) it is said that the religion of the *Nārāyaṇiyas* is the same as that recited by the *Bhagavat* to cheerless Arjuna in the battle-field,—a clear enough reference to the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The exact connexion, historical or doctrinal, between the two cults, however, is not so clear. One must admit that it is difficult to disentangle the pristine form of the cult from its natural and adventitious embellishment; but the presumption is highly probable that, like *Bhāgavatism*, *Nārāyaṇism* was in its origin non-Vedic, even if an endeavour is seen in both cases to claim Vedic authority. The teachings of the two texts, the *Nārāyaṇiya* section and the *Bhagavad-gītā*, originated admittedly from different sources, but they are emphasised as ultimately forming the doctrine of one religious body. They may have belonged to different sections of the same church, or perhaps represented an earlier and later tradition of one popular religious movement. Although diverging in most particulars, they agree at least in one essential, namely, that both of them exalt devo-

tionalism (Bhakti) as the essence of worship. As analogous Bhakti-cults, therefore, they might have flowed into the same stream of sectarian faith when earlier distinctive outlines became lost, but their actual connexion was naturally slight and artificial. In the same way, connexion with the general Viṣṇuism of the Epic is also not organic. Viṣṇu, the Purātana Deva, is indeed identified with Nārāyaṇa, the Pūrva Deva; but he does not play any distinctive rôle, nor is there any attempt to make the identification appear convincing.

The legend of Śvetadvīpa 'White Island' and the monotheistic worship of the Nārāyaṇīyas have been utilised by some scholars<sup>1</sup> for asserting the indebtedness, however veiled, of early Indian Bhakti-religion to early Christianity; but as critical study<sup>2</sup> has now shown how difficult it is to maintain the theory or obtain any certain result, it is not necessary for us to reopen the controversy. Enough evidence has now been brought forward to shew that the Śvetadvīpa, where Nārāyaṇa resides, invisible to man and gods, is an entirely Indian conception of a mythical land of blessed existence. It is conceived as a mysterious and inaccessible god-land, situated to the north of the Milk Ocean at a fantastic distance from the Mount Meru, peopled with strange supernatural beings, and illuminated by a dazzling supernatural radiance eventually emanating from the deity himself. It is a parallel to the Buddhist Sukhāvatī and Purāṇic Uttara-Kuru or Amarāvatī, and forms the Nārāyaṇīya version

<sup>1</sup> The theory was started by Lassen in his *Indische Alterthumskunde*, 2nd ed. ii. pp. 1096f, 1180f, and developed by Weber in his *Ueber die Kṛṣṇa-Jāṇḍīstāvī*, 1868, pp. 318-24 (Eng. trs. in *IA*, 1875-74, iii-iv); also in *Indische Studien* i, p. 400, ii, pp. 166f, 368f; *Die Rāma-tāpanīya Upaniṣad*, 1864, pp. 277-78 and *Die Griechen in Indien*, in *SBAW* 1890, p. 930. The question was revived by Hopkins in his essay on Christ in India in his *India, Old and New*, New York and London, 1902 (cf. also his *Religions of India*, pp. 428-32); Grierson, *Modern Hinduism and its debt to the Nestorians* in *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 317f, also in *IA* 1908, pp. 258 and in his article on Bhakti-mārga in *Hastings' Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, ii. pp. 548f (somewhat modified); Kennedy in *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 481f and 951f; Garbe, *Indien und das Christentum*, 1914, pp. 196f and in *Die Bhagavadgītā*, 2nd ed., 1921, pp. 44f.

<sup>2</sup> The most recent review of the problem is made by Clark in *JAOS*, xxxix, 1919, pp. 230f and by Ronnow in *BSOS*, v, 1929, pp. 253f. See also Jacobi in *Hastings' Encycl.* (vii, p. 196), who refers to Jaina sources and excludes Weber's hypothesis by chronological considerations.

of the popular mythical fancy of Paradise, the only modification being that the way of approach to the deity is through exclusive (Ekānta) devotional worship (Bhakti), from which the worshippers of Nārāyaṇa take the name of Ekāntins. But the monotheistic religious emotion of the devotees does not possess any element fundamentally foreign to Indian religious tendency. The mode of worship is vividly reported (xii. 336. 36f) by the three ascetics and Nārada who visit the island. The offering of sacrifice is indeed mentioned, but the attitude of adoration is entirely emotional. The folding of hands, burst of joy, uttering of names and hymns, concentration of mind (Ekāgra-manṣṭva), and mental repetition of prayers (Mānasa Japa) are all indicative of a personal feeling of intense love, to which the qualification of moral purity is also added. The Ekānta-bhakti, therefore, is an ethico-religious exaltation of emotion, rather than mere intellectual conviction. The ideal devotees are the so-called white-islanders.<sup>1</sup> They are given grotesque peculiarities, such as a head like an umbrella, a voice deep as thunder, sixty teeth, eight tusks and four testicles, and are described as radiant beings who have no external organs of sense (xii. 335. 9-11; 336. 30f; 343. 53f)! These fantastic characteristics, however, are not mere levities of popular imagination; they represent symbolically the theological ideas of the cult. They are intended to describe what is indescribable, namely, the liberated souls, who enter the deity and yet live with him blissfully in his paradise.

The philosophical background to all this is supplied, as we have already said, by elements derived from orthodox or semi-orthodox sources.<sup>2</sup> As in other parts of the Epic, so also

<sup>1</sup> Whiteness of complexion, which is associated with light or purity, is attributed to dwellers of many mythical regions of the Epic; see Clark, *op. cit.* p. 233, note. It has obviously a symbolical meaning, and need not be taken literally as referring to any white people actually living in the north,—a supposition which has misled some scholars to imagine a white continent of Christian worshippers! It should be remembered that Nārāyaṇa is a white god in the Kṛta-yuga; so is Viṣṇu.

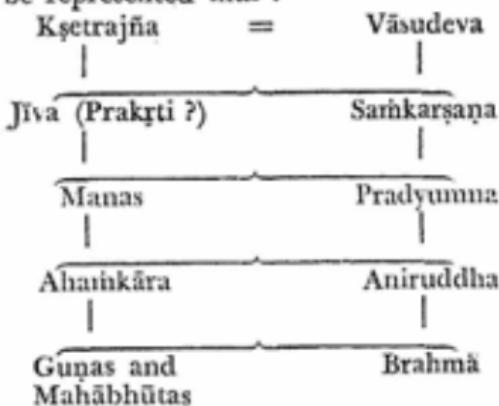
<sup>2</sup> As this question has been discussed in detail by Hopkins, Grierson and Mrinal Dasgupta, in the works cited above, a recapitulation is not necessary, except where the tenets are peculiar to the Nārāyaṇiya. Generally speaking, the purely philosophical thought, unless it is specifically modified by its theistic devotionalism, is of the same character as we find in other parts of the Epic.

here, we have a curious reconciliation of Brāhmaṇic ritualism, Upaniṣadic monism, Proto-Sāṃkhya dualism and Proto-Yoga deism,—varied ideas combined in a somewhat confusing scheme. But, apart from its basic ethico-religious ideas, what is peculiar to the Nārāyaṇa and what is ignored in the Epic in general and the *Bhagavad-gītā* in particular, is the doctrine of Vyūha or cosmic process of creative emanation. We find in it a strange combination of myth and speculation, but without it the essential character of its theology cannot be properly understood.

In the conception of the supreme deity we have a mingling of incongruous ideas. Nārāyaṇa is sometimes directly identified with the Upaniṣadic neuter Brahma, but Sāṃkhya teaching is also apparent in making this personal god the Twenty-fifth Principle and the Puruṣa, in which last conception there is a residue of the Rg-Vedic and Brāhmaṇic Puruṣa. This is the unmanifest (Avyakta) and unknowable form, but it can also be manifest (Vyakta) and knowable in its illusory or emanated forms, visible not so much to austerity (Tapas) or meditative concentration (Yoga) as to loving devotion (Bhakti). This difference between the Vyakta and Avyakta forms explains the apparent puzzle of the two forms of Nārāyaṇa, the one at Badarī and the other at Śvetadvīpa. The ascetic Nārāyaṇa at Badarī is presumably the illusory Vyakta form, who supplies the information to Nārada that his real Prakṛti or Avyakta form, discernible through Bhakti alone, is at Śvetadvīpa. In this respect, the Ekāntin devotees are also illusory images, and Nārada finds them possessed of the same supernatural attributes (Lakṣaṇas) as the deity himself (xii. 343. 36-38). This appearance of the supreme deity in two or more forms is said to be due to his Māyā or illusion (xii. 339. 45),—a term which recalls the phrase Ātmā-māyā of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. It is offered as an explanation (xii. 339. 44) of the revelation of Nārāyaṇa's cosmic form to Nārada, similar to that of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna. These theophanic appearances may or may not correspond to the heavenly (Saṃbhoga) and the earthly (Nirmāṇa) form (Kāya) of the Buddha, but they are not the real forms (Satya Kāya) of the deity; they are temporary illusory personifications of a featureless, intangible divine substance.

This theory of illusory formation must be distinguished from the schemes of Emanation (Vyūha) and Manifestation

(Prädurbhāva), which are also revealed to Nārada at Śvetadvīpa. It is somewhat difficult to set forth the Vyūha-doctrine precisely from the rather incoherent and indefinite account of the Epic<sup>1</sup>, but the main outlines are clear. It explains the cosmic process of creation by assuming two real categories of matter and spirit, which are identical in their origin in the supreme spirit, but which emerge in successive emanations. The universe is supposed to evolve in two parallel and graduated orders, namely, a physical order of material causation and a spiritual order of conditioned existence, which are named Vyūhas or Series. The process may be represented thus :



The process is obviously a curious amalgamation of dogma and myth, and as such, inexplicable in exact terminology. While the one series is modelled somewhat incongruously on Proto-Sāṁkhya scheme, the other is named after the elder brother, son and grandson respectively of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as successive emanations. At the summit stands the Kṣetrajña 'the field-knower', identified with Vāsudeva, as the unconditioned supreme being. Then comes the cosmic Jīva, which springs

<sup>1</sup> The dogma is taught in detail in xii. 339. 24-27 ; but inconsistencies appear in other passages scattered throughout (xii. 339. 72-74 ; 340. 28f ; 341. 13-17 ; 344. 14f ; 347. 17f ; 348. 57-58 ; 351. 12f). The conflicting accounts are summarised by Mrinal Dasgupta, *op. cit.*, viii, p. 70 footnote. A good general exposition is given by Barnett, in the introd. to his Engl. trs. of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, p. 48f. For later and more complicated development of the dogma, see Schrader *op. cit.*, pp. 35f; S. K. De, *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement*, Calcutta 1942, pp. 187-88, 250-51. The Vyūha doctrine is ascribed to the Bhāgavatas and discredited by Śaṅkara (*Vedāntasūtra-bhāṣya*, ii. 2. 42-44).

from Kṣetrajña; apparently it is equivalent to the primal indiscrete Prakṛti or Matter of Sāṃkhya. It corresponds to a phase of conditioned spirit called Saṃkarṣaṇa, which is probably the primal motive force. From a combination of these two spring, on the one hand, the cosmic Manas, apparently the Buddhi of Sāṃkhya, and a second phase of conditioned spirit called Pradyumna. From a union of these two, again, spring a tertiary parallel pair of physical and spiritual emanations, called Ahamkāra and Aniruddha. The last stage is the evolution, from a union of these two, of the Sāṃkhya Mahābhūtas or Elements (with Guṇas), whose dispensation of the material world is presided over by Brahmā. The supreme deity, therefore, becomes fourfold (Caturmūrti-dhara), appearing in the four forms or Vyūhas of Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

Closely connected with the Vyūha-doctrine is the Nārāyaṇīya eschatology (xii. 344. 14f), which determines the stages and processes by which the emancipated souls pass into divine bliss, but which is different from that of the Bhāgavata. It appears that some souls, after their release, enter the sun (Āditya) as the door, at whose centre Nārāyaṇa resides. From there consumed and made into subtle entities (Paramāṇu-bhūta) they enter Aniruddha. Thence as mental entities or pure minds (Manobhūta) they pass into Pradyumna. From Pradyumna they go (in what form we are not told) to Saṃkarṣaṇa. Such people are said to 'the best Brāhmaṇas, the Sāṃkhyas and the Bhāgavatas.' Casting off at this elevation all elements of material being (Triguṇa-hīma), they enter the Nirguna Kṣetrajña or Vāsudeva. These stages are incant for ordinary people; but the Ekāntin or ideal devotee reaches Kṣetrajña-Vāsudeva at once (xii. 348. 2-6). The idea of final entrance into the deity, however, is not the total absorption taught by orthodox philosophy, even though the Nārāyaṇīya Kṣetrajña-Vāsudeva corresponds to the philosophic Paramātman. It is said that the emancipated souls become one with the deity, but they are also described as dwelling with him and worshipping in everlasting bliss at Śvetadvīpa. The emancipation may be attained by knowledge or austerity but, above all, there must be the exclusive spirit of loving devotion, Ekānta-bhakti, which is the way beloved of Nārāyaṇa. Con-

nected with Bhakti on the part of the devotee, there is divine grace (Prasāda) on the part of the deity. It is the grace of Nārāyaṇa alone which enables one to see him in one or other of his emanated forms (xii. 336. 20 ; 348. 75), for the devotee is as dear to him as he is to the devotee. Nārada obtains this grace for Ekānta-darśana, but it was denied to Bṛhaspati and the three ascetics whose austerities and ritualistic acts were of no avail (xii. 339. 12f). The Bhakti alone in this theistic faith is the way to Mukti or salvation.

The Vyūha-doctrine, which is peculiar to the Nārāyaṇiya, must be distinguished from the more general theory of Prādurbhāva or Manifestation which, side by side, is taught to Nārada as a cardinal tenet. This theory believes in more or less definite material appearances of the deity, and corresponds to the doctrine of Avatāra (Descent or Incarnation) which, as a principle of popular religion, is fundamental to the Epic and the Purāṇa. The doctrine of Incarnation presupposes the recognition of the supreme god as the creator and upholder, in a deistic fashion, not only of the the cosmic (Loka-kārya xii. 339. 100, 107) but also of the moral order of the world (Sarvabhūta-hita xii. 339. 76). In this Episode, the incarnations of Nārāyaṇa are called his Prādurbhāvas, although in later theology the two terms, Avatāra and Prādurbhāva, are not identical. The term Prādurbhāva implies that the god continues to exist in his true unmanifest presence, but at the same time manifests himself in definite forms (Rūpāṇi xii. 349. 37) for particular purposes, presumably through his Yoga-powers (xii. 349. 23). But the idea involved in the term Avatāra<sup>1</sup> seems to be

<sup>1</sup> The idea of Avatāra is old ; and Hertel (*Die Sonne und Mithra*, pp. 69, 79) may be right in holding that it belonged to primitive Aryan thought. Its anticipations may be sought in the Bandhutā doctrine of the Brāhmaṇas, but it is not expressly set forth in Vedic literature. The idea of divine potency manifesting itself in certain associated objects (Bandhu) may be taken as a stage of thought preparatory to a theory of incarnation, but it hardly indicates the same reasoned view of the world. The doctrine of incarnation appears to be still developing in the Epic, though its fundamental idea is fully established. It is neither stereotyped into the usual ten, nor yet extended to the twenty-two of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, much less to the thirty-nine of later Pañcarātra Saṃhitās. On the Indian theory of incarnation generally, see Jacobi's article on Incarnation (Indian) in Hastings' *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, vii, pp. 193f.

that either the whole (Pūrṇa) or part (Aṁśa) of the divine presence actually descends (Avatāra) to the world in a particular form (Mūrti) or birth (Janma).

The Prādurbhāvas, as such, must have been originally counted as infinite in number, although they are not all heard of or recorded by tradition (xii. 339. 106). But the tendency of theological speculation has been, not only to fix the number, but also to define the manifestations clearly in relation to the occasion and the purpose. In the Nārāyaṇiya lists (xii. 339. 77-107 ; 349. 37) we have the cosmic Boar and Dwarf, the Man-lion, Paraśurāma, Dāśarathi-Rāma, Sātvata (Kṛṣṇa) and Kalki, to which are added the theriomorphic Swan (Hamsa), Tortoise and Fish. Some of these manifestations are obviously shaped out of older cosmogonic myths and must have formed a part of popular belief ; but others, like the two Rāmas and Kṛṣṇa, must have grown out of popular legends, and came to possess practical importance in popular religion as the most perfect semi-human manifestations in an epic setting. They brought more vividly to popular imagination the idea of divine grace and could not fail to awaken a responsive affection.<sup>1</sup>

In this connexion it is noteworthy that, although its fundamental tenet of Bhakti is inconsistent, the Nārāyaṇiya faith leans more towards the Vedic doctrine of action (Pravṛtti) than towards the Upaniṣadic and Proto-Sāṁkhya quietistic teaching of inaction (Nivṛtti). Both the schools of opinion are known to it and distinguished (xii. 340). We are told that the first

<sup>1</sup> The later Pañcarātra dogma of fivefold manifestation of the deity in his Para, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmin and Arcū forms absorbs the older doctrines of Māyū, Vyūha and Prādurbhāva of the Nārāyaṇiya. The Para form is the supreme divine presence, and the Vyūha forms of later theory include the usual four emanated forms given above. The Vibhava forms are secondary manifestations which are, again, fivefold, namely, Pūrṇa-avatāra (complete incarnation), Arhā-avatāra (major partial incarnation), Sakti-avatāra (incarnation in might, e.g. Siva as a form of the Lord), Kāla-avatāra (minor partial incarnation, e.g. Parasurāma) and Vibhūti or Kārya-avatāra (incarnation for a purpose, e.g. the Mohini at the Churning of the Ocean). The Antaryāmin form conceives the deity as the inward ruler of all beings. The Arcū forms are temporary incarnations of the deity for purposes of worship, e.g. in the idol or image after consecration. See Grierson in *IA*, 1906, pp. 273 footnote, and more fully in *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 624-29. For the theory of Avatāra in Bengal Vaiśnavism, see S. K. De, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-86, 239-44.

school, headed by the so-called Citraśikhandin sages of orthodox antiquity (of whom we have spoken above), consisted of ritualists and teachers of the Veda; while the second, led by seven other mind-born sons of Brahmā, also of orthodox tradition (namely, Sana, Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra, Sanatsujāta and Kapila), constituted apostles of inaction and exponents of Sāṃkhya-Yoga. In its attempt to reconcile these two views, the Nārāyaṇiya theology merely refrains from rejecting Vedic ritualism; it does not go so far as the *Bhagavad-gītā* in making out a comprehensive scheme of all acts and sanctifying them with a theory of desireless action. In other words, activity is admitted, but there is hardly any tendency to reconcile it with a higher conception of inactivity; and in all this the more popular attitude is reflected.

On the ethical side, it is laid down generally (xii. 340. 88) that sacrificial rite (Yajña), austerity (Tapas), truth (Satya), non-injury to all beings (Ahimsā) and self-control (Dama) should constitute the elements of a good religion, but all these should be subordinated to Bhakti. These traditional virtues are recognised separately in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, as well as in the Epic in general; but the most important point in this respect is the direct forbidding of animal sacrifice in the Nārāyaṇiya and the inculcation of Ahimsā, which has since become a fundamental tenet in all Vaiṣṇava sects.<sup>1</sup> The dispute between the gods and sages over animal and vegetable sacrifice, recorded in the Nārāyaṇiya legend of Uparicara-Vasu (xii. 337), is interesting from this point of view. It is a clear indication of

<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to assume any influence of Jainism and Buddhism on the evolution of the doctrine in these episodes of the Epic. Apart from the difficulty of chronology, it can be argued that respect for animal life and kindness to dumb creatures may have been a popular trait, of which we have as much an expression here as in the Jaina and Buddhist doctrine of non-injury. Although the Vedic literature as a whole does not believe in Ahimsā as a creed, and the word occurs for the first time, apparently in this sense, in *Ch. Up.* iii. 17. 4, we find in the Brāhmaṇas the indication of a mild aversion to animal sacrifice by the gradual introduction of proxy sacrifice. As a sumptuary measure, meat-eating or killing of animals is not unusual in the Epic; and as a sacrificial measure its forbidding would be pointless unless it is due, not to an inherent repugnance to killing, but to a gradual and wide-spread popular feeling of kindness to the helpless sacrificial beasts. See Hopkins, *Ethics of India*, pp. 165-66. On the attitude of the *Gītā* see above p. 34, footnote.

the ultimate victory, in this cult, of Ahimsā as a creed, which has now even the sages, if not the selfish gods, as its serious partisans. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Ahimsā is mentioned as a laudable virtue (x. 5; xiii. 7; xvi. 2; xvii. 14), but it is out of the question that the Bhagavat should insist on this virtue to Arjuna in the battle-field<sup>1</sup>; and to the Gītā-theory of disinterested action, as well as of immortality of self, the distinction between injury and non-injury is immaterial. It is remarkable, therefore, that while Ahimsā as an ethical attitude is practically ignored in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is upheld in the Nārāyaṇīya faith both by legend and precept (e.g. xii. 340. 82); and in this respect the later Vaiṣṇava sects follow the Nārāyaṇīya rule.

It would be clear from this review that even if the Nārāyaṇīya faith appears as the result of a mutual compromise with the hieratic orthodox religion, its direct connexion with a complex body of popular myths, legends and beliefs is unmistakable. Although agreeing on the fundamental tenet of Bhakti, it diverges in many essentials and particulars from the Sātvata or Bhāgavata faith, represented in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Its popular legendary character itself indicates a different source and tradition. Its conception of the personal god, his paradise and his devotees, as well as their mode of worship, is a curious combination of myth and speculation, of which there is no trace in the more coherent teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. There is some resemblance between the respective theophanies, but they are conceived quite differently. The Vyūha-doctrine, even if it is known, has no place in the Bhāgavata cosmology. The eschatology is not the same; and the process of emancipation for the Bhāgavatas is declared, in a significant passage quoted above (xii. 344. 17), to be different from, or rather inferior to, that of the Ekānta worshippers of Nārāyaṇa. The theory of Incarnation, which is general in the Epic, finds expression in both the cults, but the Nārāyaṇīya dwells on it more as a cardinal tenet. The ways of action and inaction are not reconciled on the same lines. The Bhāgavata faith

<sup>1</sup> Many instances of savage cruelty in the battle-field are found in the Epic, such as the wanton killing of the armless Bhūriṣravas by Sātyaki (a Sātvata). Kṛṣṇa himself indulges in an unseemly gloating over the killing of Ghaṭotkaca.

ignores the Ahimsā doctrine, though Ahimsā is extolled as a virtue; but in the Nārāyaṇīya it is an important ethical principle. In spite of some obvious points of agreement, these are essential differences. They are enough to justify the presumption that even if the Nārāyaṇīya episode in the Epic be shewn to be later in date (of which, however, there is no satisfactory evidence), it is probably earlier in substance, being more naïve in expression and less systematic in form. Most likely it embodies an earlier and different tradition of belief and sentiment.

### *Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and the Bhāgavata Religion*

In the Epic Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa impresses more as an historical figure than the divine Viṣṇu and the mythical Nārāyaṇa, but the process by which he came to be identified with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa is frankly obscure. Two important, but apparently conflicting, features of his character emerge in the Epic; namely, Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as the not-overscrupulous tribal chief and warrior, who is considered to be a great diplomat, and Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as the philosophical and religious teacher, who is recognised as the highest god. It is suggested that these two figures belong to different cycles of legends as two or more distinct Vāsudevas or Kṛṣṇas. We have R. G. Bhandarkar's hypothesis, accepted by Grierson and Garbe, but rejected by Hopkins and Keith, that Vāsudeva was originally a local or tribal hero of the Vṛṣṇi-Sātvatas who, as a deified saint, taught them a monotheistic religion; that he was originally quite different from the Ābhīra Kṛṣṇa or the Kṛṣṇas of whom a tradition is supposed<sup>1</sup> to exist from the time of the *Rg-veda* and the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* as seers and teachers;<sup>2</sup> that Vāsudeva originally different, became identified with Viṣṇu earlier than

<sup>1</sup> The theory that the *Ch. Up.* (iii. 17. 6) introduces us to a teacher still in *statu pupillari*, who later on became an object of worship, or that it represents a euhemeristic treatment of an original god, is indeed interesting, and even plausible, but it lacks corroboration. One cannot be at all positive with regard to the proposed identification of the Vedic and Epic Kṛṣṇa which underlies the theory. For a review of this problem see S. K. De in *IHQ* xviii, 1942, pp. 297-301; reprinted above p. 31f.

<sup>2</sup> The contention, based chiefly on grammatical grounds (Patañjali on Pāṇini iv. 1. 114), that Vāsudeva was not a patronymic but denoted a person, is entirely gratuitous and goes against the entire tradition of the Epic and the Purāṇas. Nor is there any cogent evidence for taking Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa as separate persons.—Barth's hypothesis that Viṣṇu himself

with Kṛṣṇa; and that ultimately all these divergent legends came to be mixed up. It is alleged that there are passages of earlier origin in the Epic, from which we can make out the successive stages when Vāsudeva was a hero but not yet divine, and when he was divine but not yet the only and supreme god. Some scholars<sup>1</sup> again, maintain that Kṛṣṇa or Vāsudeva did not figure at all in the original Epic, but was introduced later on to justify the action of the Pāṇḍavas. All these attractive, but hasty, conjectures may be laid aside for the simple reason that there is no conclusive evidence in the Epic or in previous literature to prove any one of them. The existence of cycles of legends in a composite Epic like the *Mahābhārata* is indeed not denied; but the assumption of Kṛṣṇa and Vāsudeva as two separate entities or of the fusion of two or several Vāsudevas or Kṛṣṇas into one is based upon the further *a priori* assumption that the Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa legend in the Epic must be analysed into several units, and that each of these units originally concerned different persons of the same name, but was subsequently blended to form one mass round one theomorphic figure. Unfortunately, the evidence adduced is too slender and indefinite to warrant such complacent splitting up of text-units, legends and personalities. All these theories maintain that in the original Epic Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was only a man who was subsequently deified or made identical with an accepted deity or deified person. While his human character is quite vivid and unmistakable in the present text of the Epic, he is at the same time not regarded as an ordinary mortal; and his divine nature and identity with the supreme god is as much recognised throughout as his strong human form and personality. The paradox is, of course, explained by the theory of *Avatāra*, which postulates the actual periodical descent of god into the world in times of its need. It is admissible that such a supposition of god assuming a human form is often in fact the reversal of the true relation, but exactly how

first assumed importance through his identification with Kṛṣṇa is as difficult to establish as the view that the latter assumed importance from his identification with the former. Throughout the Epic the identity of Viṣṇu, Vāsudeva and Kṛṣṇa is already so complete, and external evidence so meagre, that all traces of previous history are lost or obliterated.

<sup>1</sup> M. Winternitz, *Hist. of Indian Literature* (Engl. trs.) i, p. 456.

and when the transformation took place is a riddle which cannot be satisfactorily solved from our present data.

On the other hand, there are scholars who believe Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was always a god in the Epic, having originally been a solar deity or a vegetation spirit. They deny his historical reality and regard him as the personification of pure myth by popular imagination. The solar origin of Kṛṣṇa<sup>1</sup> seems to have been suggested by his identification with Viṣṇu, who was originally a solar god. But in the case of the epic Viṣṇu himself there is hardly any trace left of his solar origin and character; it is much less so in the case of Kṛṣṇa, if he ever was a solar deity. Having regard to the name itself, the 'dark sun' would require satisfactory explanation to make the theory look plausible. As we have already pointed out, there is also nothing to shew that the Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa cult had any connexion, original or developed, with sun-worship in any form.<sup>2</sup> The theory seems to be of a piece with such misconceived conjectures as that of Senart, rightly repudiated by Oldenberg, which would resolve the historical Buddha into a solar myth. Still less convincing is the other strange hypothesis<sup>3</sup> which would seek the original divine character of Kṛṣṇa in the spirit of reviving vegetation, of which a parallel is adduced from the Greek Dionysus. Since the theory is based on the alleged implication (now discredited) of a kind of vegetation masque in an exceedingly doubtful passage<sup>4</sup> of Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* (on iii. 1. 26), and draws a misleading analogy from other fields of primitive religious belief, it is not necessary to discuss it; for in the Epic itself there is no evidence to support this scholarly fancy. In fact, the assumption of a non-human origin goes against all traditions, Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina, which agree in ascribing a human character and personality to Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa.

These attempts at critical reconstruction may be *a priori* interesting, but they go beyond the actual evidence. What-

<sup>1</sup> Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 172f.

<sup>2</sup> S. K. De in *BSOS* vi, 1931, pp. 669-72; reprinted above p. 27f.

<sup>3</sup> Keith in *JRAS*, 1915, p. 841; also *ibid.*, 1911, p. 1008.

<sup>4</sup> Various explanations have been suggested by Kāyaṭa in his *Cosm.* by Weber in *Ind. Studien* xiii, p. 488; by Lüders in *SBWA*, 1916, p. 608f; by Winternitz in *ZDMG*, lxxiv, 1920, p. 118f; by Hillebrandt in *ZDMG* lxxii, 1918, p. 227; by Keith in *BSOS*, i, pt. 4, p. 27f, etc.

ever may have been the origin and history of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as a hero, half-god and god, or *vice versa*, there can, however, be no doubt as much about his human personality as his divine character in the Epic.<sup>1</sup> In the *Bhagavad-gītā* in particular<sup>2</sup>, he is no longer the warrior of dubious political inclinations, but the divine teacher of an exalted faith. He himself claims in it his complete identity with the supreme god, and declares the fact as well as the principle of Avatāra. Although preached to Arjuna in the battle-field in the face of an emergency, one of the specific objects of the work appears to be the establishment of the faith of the Bhāgavatas with its central doctrine of Bhakti. Apart from this, external literary evidence from the time of Pāṇini, Patañjali and Megasthenes, as well as epigraphic testimony in more historical times<sup>3</sup>, clearly establishes a tradition of the worship of Vāsudeva at least in the 2nd century B.C., if not earlier. The origin and development of the cult may be as obscure as those of its promulgator; but its earliest and most important source is the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

<sup>1</sup> All the relevant data from the Epic are collected together by Tadpatrikar in his essay on the Kṛṣṇa Problem in *ABORI* x, pp. 269-344.

<sup>2</sup> The notable incident of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa's promulgation of the *Gītā* to Arjuna is acknowledged in the *Anu-gītā*, not to speak of stray passages in other parts of the Epic. But the tradition is not recorded in the *Purāṇa* accounts. It is possible, as Tadpatrikar has shewn, that the Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa legends, found respectively in the Epic and the *Purāṇas*, represent, barring mutual influence, two separate traditions.—There were, of course, scoffers and unbelievers with regard to the divinity of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa; and we hear even of a spurious Vāsudeva, a false pretender, in the Epic itself.

<sup>3</sup> All the materials will be found collected in Bhandarkar, *Vaisyaicism*, etc. cited above; in Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, *Early History of the Vaishaca Sect*, 2nd Ed., Calcutta Univ., 1936, and in Ramaprasad Chanda, *Archaeology and Vaishaca Tradition*, Memoir of the Arch. Survey No. 5, Calcutta 1920.—The name Bhagavat, of course, like the name Buddha, was originally an honorific epithet, connoting reverence, and was applied in the Epic, as elsewhere, to gods and men alike. It has perhaps no relation to the name of the Vedic deity Bhaga; but being derived from the same verbal root, it is connected with the term Bhakti. For a discussion of what the word Bhagavat signifies as the name of the deity, see Grierson, *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 159-62; Govindacharya Svami, *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 861-62; V. V. Sovani, *JRAS*, 1910, p. 863f; F. Otto Schrader, *JRAS*, 1911, p. 194; E. W. Hopkins, *JRAS*, 1911, pp. 727-38.

itself, to which, included in the Epic, one should turn for an understanding of the *Bhāgavata* doctrine in its pristine form.

*The Bhagavad-gītā*

The value of the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been differently estimated by critical scholarship; but it has never been denied that it ranks, as it really does, as one of the greatest religious documents of ancient India and holds a unique place in its religious life. Our concern here is not with the details of its religious or philosophical teaching<sup>1</sup>, on which much has been written, and written with knowledge and insight, by competent scholars; but a few words are necessary for our purpose on the historical significance of the work as the earliest record of the Bhakti-devoutness of the *Bhāgavatas*.

In the various forms of sectarian worship described above, the devotional theism of the Epic is seen in one religious setting or the other; but it is not until we come to the *Bhagavad-gītā* that we reach a high and clear level of the religious doctrine of devotion (Bhakti), set forth not only with a systematic philosophical background but also as the central and unifying principle of a vital, practical religion. In the *Nārāyaṇīya* episode, we come, no doubt, to a certain stage of the theologism of Bhakti, but it still moves in an indefinite haze of mythology, sentiment and speculation. With the *Bhagavad-gītā* we pass into a clearer atmosphere of definite ideas, which are no longer merged in a floating mass of fanciful legends; and the intellectual seriousness and ethical nobility with which they are promulgated by a more or less personalised expounder give them the form of a deliberate historical religion.

Whatever absolute value the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* may be found to possess, it should be regarded, in relation to the Epic in which it is imbedded, as an expression of a particular historical trend of thought and feeling. In its syncretic theism, more than in the general religious attitude of the Epic, we find the same, but more remarkable, instance of a fusion of two streams, the hieratic and popular. The

<sup>1</sup> This aspect of the work, in its historical perspective, has already been dealt with by the present writer in his article on the Philosophy of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* contributed to the *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, published by the Government of India (London 1952, pp. 94-105). See above p. 36f.

work absorbs a great deal of the philosophical ideas of the past, but they are reinterpreted and harmonised with the clearly theistic and devotional attitude of a new popular faith. The Vedic ritualism, the Upaniṣadic gnosis of meditative idealism, the materialistic dualism of Proto-Sāṃkhya and the disciplinary dualism of Proto-Yoga, the rigorous Karma-doctrine of rebirth and bondage,—all these are strangely modified and combined in its peculiar devotional scheme, which centres round the conception of a vivid personal god. It thus gives expression to a form of synthesis between the conflicting views of previous thinkers and ritualists, on the one hand, and the popular worship of a personal god, on the other; but this is accomplished, not as a deliberate theological exercise, but by the vital and vitalising force of its central doctrine of devotion (Bhakti), which teaches selfless love and service to a god of love and grace, probably in an age when God was being lost in divergent beliefs and speculations.

As the scripture of the Bhāgavatas, the *Gītā*, therefore, presents the worshipper with an embodied object of adoration, realisable in the individual consciousness; but it also teaches the value of a harmonious combination of knowledge, discipline and service in religious life; for the devotional attitude, though essentially emotional, is here not an unreasonable intensity of feeling divorced from knowledge and activity. The only renunciation (*Saṃnyāsa*) that it approves is renunciation of the fruits of one's acts in a spirit of perfect selflessness, so that freed from the polluting effect of selfish attachment, all acts and their fruits become dedicated to the Bhagavat as offerings of devoted love. Work done in this spirit is really no work; for he has truly abandoned action who has abandoned the interest and fruits thereof. This is a new interpretation of Naiṣkarmya as the state of inaction reached through right action. The bondage of Karman is thus not transgressed but transcended. The Bhagavat himself sets the highest example of work by incarnating himself from time to time in a cosmic spirit of divine unselfishness only for the good of the world. His cosmic work is thus no work, and does not involve him in the bondage of Karman. By dedicating all acts to him the devotee attains similar freedom, and merges as it were his own individual action in His cosmic action. With regard to ritual-

istic activity, enjoined by the Brāhmaṇas, the sacrificial acts are not entirely disapproved, but reinterpreted and reconciled. The cosmic purpose of the Vedic Sacrifice is indeed not denied, but it is pointed out that the normal ritualistic acts have the narrow object of attaining merit or specific reward. Those who desire such lower ends may attain them, but such ends do not carry them very far; for merit thus attained is exhausted after a time and there is no permanent release from the cycle of births and deaths. On the other hand, all dutiful acts, done without any desire of reward or merit, are really symbolic sacrifices, in which a man lays his narrow ends and interests at the altar of the Bhagavat. Thus, accepting the authoritative-ness of Brāhmaṇic ritualism, as well as the right performance of the prescribed duties of caste and class, the *Bhagavad-gītā* makes them subservient to its peculiar doctrine of Karman in relation to Bhakti. The same attitude is seen also in purely philosophical matters. If the *Gītā* accepts the Sāṁkhya terminology of categories, which were apparently ancient, to explain the relation of the supreme self to the material and spiritual worlds of conditioned being, it does not accept the Sāṁkhya theory of non-active Puruṣa nor its silence about God. It believes in a theistic Puruṣa-doctrine, which is obviously a development of Upaniṣadic teaching, and not of Sāṁkhya which denies a supreme Puruṣa and believes in a plurality of Puruṣas. This theory of Uttama Puruṣa falls in with the later Upaniṣadic conception of Iṣvara, which very well finds a place in the theistic scheme of the *Gītā*.

It would seem, therefore, that what would have been a merely philosophical treatise is in this way converted into a powerful religious document by a change of emphasis from the speculative to the practical through the dynamic force of its religious thought and feeling. As the teaching checks extreme rationalism, on the one hand, it also tends, on the other, to rationalise blind faith by placing it on the firm foundation of knowledge and discipline. The work has no particular interest in the barren pedantry of the scholastic; while its speculative equipoise checks the mythological exuberance of popular fancy. While not entirely rejecting 'Sāṁkhya' or philosophy based on knowledge, it makes a special pleading for 'Yoga' or philosophy based on action:

for it aims at teaching not so much a system of speculation as a rule of life. Whatever may be the value of its reconciliation of traditional philosophical and religious notions, there can be no doubt that the work speaks of theistic devotion (Bhakti) in no uncertain terms; and it is this element which supplies stimulus to the synthesis it proposes. The true Bhakti is declared to be the source of that equipoise or balance of mind (Samatva), in which reason, will and emotion play their proper part, because it tends to the consecration of every act of life in its entirety to the disinterested service of the Bhagavat. In this respect the reflective and ethical Bhakti of the *Bhagavad-gītā* differs from the Bhakti of the mediaeval emotionalists, who would reject Jñāna, and even Karman, and regard ecstatic passion of a mystic-erotic character as essential. The *Gītā* doctrine takes a broader view of human personality; it does not isolate the fervour of religious emotion from intellectual seriousness and ethical activity.

As the doctrine seeks to establish a personal relationship between the deity and devotee, it emphasises not only man's need of loving devotion but also the self-surrendering grace of a loving god. One of the greatest acts of divine graciousness is the god's coming to birth from birthlessness by his cosmic power of illusion (Māyā) and veiling his real nature by manifesting himself as an individual at the time of the world's need. The doctrine of Avatāra or periodical descent of the godhead for upholding the moral order and, in a somewhat deistic fashion, for setting the world right, is generally acknowledged in the *Mahābhārata*. We have already referred to it in connexion with the Nārāyaṇya theory of Prādurbhāva and distinguished it from the Vyūha-doctrine ignored in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. But the fact of Avatāra in this work, as well as the theory, appears to be a necessary corollary to its declared identification of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, whose worship it inculcates as the Bhagavat, with the Supreme Being. The doctrine of repeated Avatāras was also necessary to connect him with earlier cosmogonic and theriomorphic myths and legends. But he is also the philosophical Ātman-Brahman, the Puruṣa or Puruṣottama, the Kṣetrajña, the Avyakta, the Yogeśvara, the Saviour, the source and essence of universal being. As such Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa is not only identified with Viṣṇu, the highest

deity in the Epic, as well as with his various forms and incarnations, but he is also related to Siva, Brahmā and other gods of rival sects, who are subsumed under one supreme name. In this way the doctrine attempts not only to establish a unity of godhead but also check blind sectarianism by adopting a broad and tolerant attitude.

There cannot, however, be any doubt that in the *Gitā* the Bhagavat or Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa directly advances his claim of identity with the supreme god by calling upon Arjuna to meditate on him, to bow down to him, to love and worship him, and to take refuge in him as the final goal and resting place. He describes all his divine powers and attributes to compel feelings of wonder and reverence, and gives an effective ocular demonstration of his awe-inspiring divinity by revealing his theophanic form to the faithful Arjuna. He also gives an exposition to Arjuna of the doctrine of Avatāra to explain his assumption of human form, adding that some people, deluded by his divine power of illusion (Daivī Māyā<sup>1</sup>), accept him as a human being and forget his divinity. Although Kṛṣṇa nowhere explicitly claims to be the Brahman,<sup>2</sup> Arjuna addresses him as such, and throughout the identity is implied.

<sup>1</sup> The epic Māyā, as Hopkins points out (*Great Epic of India*, p. 138f), is, in most cases, merely a trick of delusion exercised by the gods, especially by the chief illusion-god, Kṛṣṇa, for overcoming the enemy. The Daivī Māyā of the *Gitā* (vii. 14f) is caused by the Guṇas; but this Guṇa-made delusion appears to be equivalent to the Prakṛti-made delusion of Sāṃkhya. If it is also Ātma-māyā, it is a psychic delusion which causes the unborn god, by means of Prakṛti, to appear as born. Cf. the Māyā of Nārāyaṇa (xii. 339. 45) by which the deity appears in two or more forms at the same time. Even if it is assumed that the term Māyā is used in the *Gitā* in the philosophical sense, the work does not appear to accept the specifically Vedāntic position of the unreality of Matter. The Māyā is not material existence; it is rather the mode in which the Matter is apprehended by the Mind, both of which are eternal verities. The *Gitā* agrees with the *Sreṣṭāśrātara* in making Iṣvara the creator of Māyā, which however is not identical with Prakṛti or with Avidyā. It is rather the divine power of cosmic illusion whereby, through the medium of Prakṛti and the Guṇas, the Iṣvara veils his real being.

<sup>2</sup> But in xiv. 27 the Bhagavat calls himself the Pratiṣṭhā or ground of Brahman, which term, however, is differently explained by the commentators.

It is true that all this should be taken as indicating sectarian worship, but the *Gītā* adopts a liberal attitude in recognising whatever value there is in older or current faiths and practices. It rises above narrow sectarianism by the spirit of toleration and compromise which marks its views about "other gods" and other modes of worship. The justification is found in the recognition of the infinite variety of aspects in which the supreme deity may present himself to diversity of men and minds, as well as in the view that some kind of worship is better than none. The worship offered to other deities is represented as indirect, even if imperfect, worship offered to the Bhagavat himself. Those who desire lower ends and worship lower forms receive their ends and fruits of worship accordingly, for the Lord resorts to men in the way in which he is approached. The *Gītā*, therefore, recognises different kinds and grades of devotees, and shows an anxiety to throw the way of Bhakti open to all according to capacity.

The doctrine is, thus, presented in a comprehensive and straightforward form, and does not show any such bewildering display of analysis as the mediaeval exponents of the Bhakti cult delight to elaborate. To all men the Bhagavat is impartial, desiring in his infinite grace the welfare of all, and responding to men in the way in which he is approached. There is, therefore, no fixed rule or mode of worship, for there are various kinds of spiritual experience and various avenues of approach. But the best way is the most simple way of complete self-surrender to divine grace, not in inactivity but in selfless activity, not in ignorance but in the fulness of knowledge. The doctrine thus attempts to correlate the love and service of the simple man with the wisdom and insight of the thinker. It is a high tribute to its achievement in universal appeal that the work has lent itself to interpretations other than *Bhāgavata*, and has been understood as teaching even such extreme monism as that of *Saṃkara*.

*Our Heritage*, i, 1953.

## SANSKRIT DEVOTIONAL POETRY AND HYMNOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

The earliest literary antecedent of Sanskrit devotional poetry and hymnology is to be found in the *Rg-veda*, which consists almost entirely of hymns of praise and prayer centering round some specific god or gods. The hymns are inspired by what is perhaps an abiding sentiment of the human heart, but while the devotional spirit of the god-seeker (*devayu*) and god-lover (*deva-kāma*) in that far-off age is nearly the same as that found in later times, the respective theme and mode of expression are necessarily divergent. The Vedic poet possessed the secret of making his religion poetry and his poetry religion; but his descendant lost the art and evolved a new type of Stotra literature in which he conveyed his highest religious aspiration. In the meantime, the old gods had changed their character and new gods had come into being. As a race they were no longer conceived as superior, sinless and ethically apart. They were sufficiently individualised to inspire a sense of affectionate intimacy and familiarity associated with personal devotion; and the attitude of the worshipper passed far beyond an acknowledgment of benefits already received or a petition for further acts of expected generosity. The elaborate and somewhat mechanical Vedic ritual of Homa, with its pouring of libations, chanting and repetition of formulas, was replaced by the more personal and sensuous mode of *Pūjā*, with its offering of flower, food, incense, song and dance. The spirit of devotion found expression not so much in the manifold elaborateness of ritual worship but in the psychological mood with which that worship was offered. The gods were not only feared but also loved; and the gods in their turn are said to love their worshippers. The new mythology had vividness, warmth and colour, and brought the gods nearer to human life and emotion. Unlike the later Greek poets to whom the Homeric inspiration was lost, the Sanskrit poets never regarded their gods as playthings of fancy. Their theme was a living

<sup>1</sup> Being a course of lectures delivered at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, by invitation from the University of Bombay in 1947.

reality to them as well as their audience, and its emotional possibilities appealed to their imagination.

But in the meantime life had grown more complicated and many-sided, and its problems more varied. The literature was no longer predominantly religious, but being abundantly developed on the secular side, it was essentially profane. The spirit of Vedic literature, at least in its earlier phases, was optimistic and care-free; but Sanskrit literature, with the development of the inexorable doctrine of Karman and rebirth, became pervaded with a deeply pessimistic spirit. The classical systems of philosophy, which greater leisure had brought into existence, started with the presumption of human misery and occupied themselves with theories of its eradication; and in this procedure the heterodox religious systems of Buddhism and Jainism agreed. The Vedic people heartily believed in enjoying the good things of this life, while heartily believing in the extension of this enjoyment in the next; but in later times other-worldliness became a matter of greater concern than this-worldliness, and the unlimited pessimism with regard to this world was balanced by unlimited optimism with regard to the next. The new theology of the popular cults developed a theory of divine incarnation, which supplied a resting place for the sentiment of human surrender and divine grace. The attitude fostered at once a spirit of stoical resignation, on the one hand, and of mystic faith and hope, on the other, which brought about a new outlook on life and supplied a speculative background to its fervent devotional poems.

The Stotra literature revived the old devotional spirit under these new conditions, and its wealth and universality became really amazing. The Epics, as well as the Purāṇas and Tantras of uncertain date, abound in liturgical hymns in which the gods of the new Hindu mythology receive worship and adoration; while the Jainas and Buddhists do not lag behind in addressing similar hymns to the deities and teachers of their pantheon and hagiology. From the impassioned contemplation of a somewhat personalised Brahman in the younger group of Upaniṣads, such as the *Kaṭha* and the *Śvetāśvatara*, we come to such sublime hymns in the Great Epic as that addressed by Arjuna to the theophanic appearance of the Bhagavat. Among the Purāṇas, the *Viṣṇu*, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Mārkandeya*, *Padma*,

*Shanda*, *Bhāgavata*, *Brahma-vaivarta* and *Devī-bhāgavatā* may be cited as store-houses of remarkable Stotras ; while Tantras like *Prapañca-sāra*, *Rudra-yāmala*, *Viśva-sāra*, *Śāradā-tilka*, *Mahā-nirvāṇa* and *Tantra-sāra*, and later apocryphal sectarian Upaniṣads like *Nārāyaṇa*, *Kaivalya* and *Gopāla-tāpanī* contain some good specimens of classical Stotras. Some of these compositions are meant solely for the purpose of sects and cults ; some are mere theological collections of sacred epithets or strings of a hundred or thousand sacred names ; there are eulogies of some of the localised deities (such as *Annapūrṇā*, *Tripurā*, *Maṇikarṇikā*, or *Kāla-bhairava*), and even of sacred rivers like the *Gāṅgā*, *Yamunā* or *Godāvarī*, consistently with the older Vedic tradition. Most of these religious poems have a stereotyped form and little individuality ; but some, at least, can be singled out for their nobility of sentiment and charm of expression, and they certainly form an important link in the chain of religious evolution.

But very soon the higher poetry and philosophy invaded the field, and the Stotra became an important, if a somewhat neglected, wing of the Kāvya poetry itself. Aśvaghoṣa's early eulogy of the Buddha in his *Buddha-carita* (xxvii) is unfortunately lost in Sanskrit, but the spurious *Gaṇḍī-stotra-gāthā*, often ascribed to him, has been restored and edited. This Sanskrit text is a small poem in twenty-nine stanzas, composed mostly in the sonorous *Sragdharā* metre. It is a hymn in praise of *Gaṇḍī*, the Buddhist monastery gong, consisting of a long symmetrical piece of wood ; the theme of the poem is the religious message which its sound is supposed to carry when beaten with a short wooden club. The composition is marked by some metrical, but not much poetical, skill ; and one of its stanzas (st. 20) shows that it was composed at a much later time in Kashmir. Of Aśvaghoṣa's successors, Mātrceṭa has ascribed to his credit some twelve works in Tibetan and one in Chinese. Most of these are in the nature of Stotras, and some belong distinctly to Mahāyāna : but only fragments of *Śatapañcasatikā-stotra* and *Catuḥ-sataka-stotra*, panegyric of one hundred and fifty and four hundred stanzas respectively, have been recovered in Sanskrit. Both these works are simple devotional poems in *Slokas*. They are praised by Yi-tsing, to whom Mātrceṭa is already a famous poet ; but they do not appear to possess much

literary merit. Evidently they impressed the faithful more by their pious thought than by their literary form.

Of greater interest and literary worth are two fine Stotras to Viṣṇu and Brahmā, both in the Śloka metre, uttered by the gods in Kālidāsa's *Raghu* (x. 16-32) and *Kumāra* (ii. 4-15) respectively, although it is somewhat strange that there is no direct Stotra to the poet's beloved deity Śiva. In this connexion a reference may be made to a similar insertion of Stotras in other Mahākāvyas, such as the Stava of Mahādeva by Arjuna in the closing canto of Bhāravi's poem, that of Kṛṣṇa by Bhīma in Māgha's *Sisupāla-vadha* xiv, and that of Caṇḍī by the gods in Ratnākara's *Hara-vijaya* xlvi (167 stanzas). These are Stotras of a distinctly learned type. They are indicative of an early tradition of literary (and not liturgical) Stotras, in which verses like :

tvām āmananti prakṛtiṁ puruṣārtha-pravartinīm |  
tad-darśinam udāśinām tvām eva puruṣām viduh ||  
(Kālidāsa).

or

udāśitārami nigṛhīta-mānasair  
grīhītam adhyātma-dṛṣṭā kathaṁcana |  
bahir-vikāraṇī prakṛteḥ pṛthag̃ viduh  
purātanām tvāmī puruṣām purāvidah || (Māgha)

forcibly draw attention to their philosophical background, even though doctrine or dogma does not spoil their elegance of expression.

To this learned literary tradition belong the early efforts of Mayūra and Bāṇabhaṭṭa. They are not very impressive for their purely poetic merit or for impassioned thought, and there is no question of a philosophical background. They illustrate the early application of the elegant, but distinctly laboured, manner of the Kāvya and its rhetorical contrivances to this kind of literature. Mayūra is associated, chiefly by late Jaina legends and indications of commentators and anthologists, with Bāṇabhaṭṭa as a literary rival in the court of Harṣavardhana and as related by marriage either as brother-in-law or father-in-law. The legend also speaks of Mayūra's affliction with leprosy by the angry curse of Bāṇa's wife, Mayūra's alleged sister or daughter, whose intimate personal beauty he is said to have described in an indiscreet poem. This latter work is supposed

to be identical with the highly erotic, but rather conventional, poem of eight fragmentary stanzas, which goes by the name of *Mayūrāṣṭaka* and which describes a fair lady returning from a secret visit to her lover. Three of its stanzas are in *Sragdharā*, which is the metre of Mayūra's *Sūrya-Śataka*, and the rest in *Sārdūlavikṛīḍita*. It refers, with more wit than taste, to the "tiger-sport" of the lady with "the demon of a lover" (*kenaīśā rati-rākṣasena ramitā sārdūla-vikṛīḍitā*) and to the beauty of her limbs which makes even an old man amorously inclined (*dryṣṭvā rūpam idam priyāṅga-gahanam vyuddho'pi kāmāyate*). If the poem is genuine, it is possible that such description in the poem itself started the fulsome legend; but the legend also adds that a miraculous recovery from the unhappy disease was effected, through the grace of the Sun-god, by Mayūra's composing his well known poem, the *Sūrya-Śataka*, in praise of the deity. It must be said, however, that the Śataka gives the impression of being actuated not so much by piety as by the spirit of literary display. The theme of the work, which retains in its present form exactly one hundred stanzas, consists of an extravagant description and praise, in the laboured Kāvya-style, of the Sun-god and his appurtenances, the horses that draw his chariot, his charioteer Aruna, the chariot itself and the solar disc. The sixth stanza of the poem refers to the sun's power of healing diseases, which apparently set the legend rolling; but the belief that the sun can inflict and cure leprosy is old, being preserved in the Iranian story of Sām, the prototype of the Purāṇic legend of Sāmba. It may not have anything to do with the presumption that the cult of the sun was popular in the days of Harṣa, even if Harṣa's father is described in the *Harṣa-carita* as a devotee of the sun.

In spite of its stilted manner, it must be said in favour of Mayūra's poem that it does not lack dignity, vigour and elegance of expression. The poet is not so very prone to habitual punning as Bāṇabhaṭṭa is; but he can sometimes use alliteration and Yamaka with good effect, and we have some clever, even if very elaborate, similes and metaphors, e.g. of the thirsty traveller (st. 14), of antidote against poison (st. 31), of the day-tree (st. 34) and of dramatic technique (st. 50). One must also admit the flowing gorgeousness of the metre; in fact, the majesty which the long-drawn-out and compactly loaded *Srag-*

dharā can put on has seldom been better displayed. Take, for instance, the following stanza :

śrīna-ghrāṇāṅghri-pāṇīn vraṇibhir apaghanair  
gharghara-vyakta-ghośān  
dīrghāghrātān aghaughaiḥ punar api ghaṭayaty  
eka ullāghayan yah ||  
gharmāṇīśos tasya vo'ntar dviguṇa-ghana-  
ghrāṇā-nighna-nirvighna-vṛtter  
dauñīshā siddha-viśvabha-viśvabha-viśvabha

For sheer volume of resonant sound such verses stand unsurpassed. But here the praise must end. It must be admitted that the poem is written in a deliberately elaborate metre ; and its poetic diction, with its obvious partiality for compound words, difficult construction, constant alliteration and jingling of syllables and other rhetorical devices, is equally elaborate. Harsh-sounding series of syllables often occur (st. 6, 98 etc.), while one stanza (st. 71) is cited by Mammaṭa as an instance of a composition where facts are distorted to effect an alliteration. The Akṣara-dambara, which Bāṇa finds in the diction of the Gaudas, is quite abundant here, as also in his own *Candī-śataḥ* ; and it is no wonder that one of the commentators, Madhusūdana (about 1654 A.D.), gives to both Mayūra and Bāṇa the designation of eastern poets (Paurastya) ! There can be no doubt that the highly stylised and recondite tendencies of Mayūra's solitary Stotra have little touch of spontaneous inspiration : and whatever power there is of visual presentation, it is often neutralised by the deliberate selection and practice of laboured tricks of rhetoric. The work is naturally favoured, not as a Stotra but as a Kāvya, by the rhetoricians, grammarians and lexicographers, and frequently commented upon (the number of commentaries listed by Aufrecht being twenty), but to class it with the best specimens of the Stotra or of the Kāvya would show the lack of ability to distinguish between poetry or devotion and its make-believe.

The *Candī-balaka* of Bāṇa is of no higher poetical or devotional merit ; it is cited even less by rhetoricians and anthologists, and commentaries on it are much fewer. It consists of 102 stanzas composed in the same sonorous *Sragdharā* metre and written in the same elaborate rhetorical diction. As such, the

poem shows noteworthy similarity to Mayūra's Śataka, and lends plausibility to the tradition that it was composed in admiring rivalry. The myth of Cāṇḍī's slaying of the buffalo-demon is old, being mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* ix. 44-46 and amplified in the Purāṇas; but Bāṇa makes use of it, not for embellishing the story but for a high-flown panegyric of Cāṇḍī, including a glorification of the power of Cāṇḍī's left foot which killed the demon by its marvellous kick! Bāṇa does not adopt Mayūra's method of systematic description of the various objects connected with Cāṇḍī, but seeks diversion by introducing, in as many as forty-eight stanzas, speeches in the first person (without dialogue) by Cāṇḍī's handmaids Jayā and Vijayā, Śiva, Kārttikeya, the gods and demons—and even by the foot and toe-nails of Cāṇḍī! Thus, Cāṇḍī in ten stanzas taunts the gods, rebukes Mahiṣa, soliloquises or speaks to Śiva; Mahiṣa in nineteen stanzas derides the gods or reviles Cāṇḍī, although in every instance his words are cut short by the inevitable *coup de grace* from Cāṇḍī's foot; Jayā and Vijayā in eight stanzas mock the gods or praise Cāṇḍī; while Śiva in five stanzas addresses or propitiates Cāṇḍī. Bāṇa has none of Mayūra's elaborate similes, but puns are of frequent occurrence and are carried to the extent of involving interpretation of entire individual stanzas in two ways. There is an equally marked tendency towards involved and recondite constructions, but the stylistic devices and conceits are perhaps more numerous and prominent. The work has indeed all the reprehensible features of the verbal bombast by which Bāṇa himself characterises the diction of the Gauḍas. Even the splendour and never-sluggish melody of its voluminous metre does not fully redeem its artificialities of idea and expression, while the magnificent picturesqueness, which characterises Bāṇa's exuberant prose, is not much in evidence here. To a greater extent than Mayūra's Śataka, Bāṇa's Śataka is a poetical curiosity rather than a real poem, much less a real Stotra. It is a literary *tour de force* which gives interesting indication of the decline of poetic taste and growing artificiality of poetic form, which now begins to mark the Kāvya and necessarily affect the Stotra.

One of Rājaśekhara's eulogistic stanzas quoted in the *Sūkti-muktāvali* (iv. 70) connects Bāṇa and Mayūra with Mātaṅga (*v.l.* Cāṇḍāla) Divākara as their literary rival in the

court of king Harṣavardhana. Nothing remains of this poet's work except four stanzas quoted in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, of which one (no. 2546) describing the sea-girdled earth successively as the grandmother, mother, spouse and daughter-in-law, apparently of king Harṣa, has been censured for inelegance by Abhinavagupta. It has been suggested that the poet Mātaṅga should be identified with Mānatuṅga, the well known Jaina Ācārya and author of two Stotras, namely the *Bhaktāmara* in Sanskrit and the *Bhayahara* in Prakrit, on the ground that some Jaina tales of miracle connect him with Bāṇa and Mayūra. But the evidence is undoubtedly weak. The form Mātaṅga of the name itself is found to be a sporadic variant of the form Cāṇḍīlā in the text in which it occurs. The legend of the Jina's delivering Mānatuṅga from his self-imposed fetters, on the parallel of Cāṇḍī's healing the self-amputated limbs of Bāṇa, is probably suggested by the general reference in the poem itself to the Jina's power, apparently in a metaphorical sense, of releasing the devotee from fetters. The presumption, again, that the three Stotras of Mayūra, Bāṇa and this poet were meant respectively to celebrate Sun-worship, Śaktism and Jainism is more schematic than convincing; while the date of Mānatuṅga, who is claimed by both the Śvetāmbaras and the Digambaras, is uncertain, the Jaina monastic records placing him as early as the 3rd century A.D. and other traditions bringing him down to periods between the 5th and the 9th century A.D.! There is also little basis of comparison between Mānatuṅga's Stotra and the Śatakas of Bāṇa and Mayūra. The *Bhaktāmara*, the title of which is formed by opening words of its first verse, is a fine religious hymn of forty-four stanzas, in the lighter and shorter *Vasantatilaka* metre, in praise of the Jina R̥śabha as the incomparable and almost deified saint; but it is not set forth in the Āśir form of Bāṇa and Mayūra's Śatakas. Like a proper hymn, it is addressed directly to the saint himself. It is composed in the Kāvya manner, but it is certainly much less elaborate, and the rhetorical devices, especially punning and alliteration, are not prominent. Its devotional feeling is unmistakable. Confessing the insufficiency of his words but the urgency of his devotional impulse, the poet cries out :

alpa-śrutāṁ śrutavatāṁ parihāsa-dhāma  
 tvad-bhaktir eva mukharīkurute balān mām |  
 yat kokilaḥ kila madhau madhurām virauti  
 tac cāru-cūta-kalikā-nikaraika-hetuḥ ||

But he is certainly no mean poet ; and even if such eulogistic hymn does not often contain much that is distinctive in form and content, the genuineness of its feeling and expression makes it rise much above the conventional level.

The superior merit of Mānatuṅga's Stotra becomes obvious when it is contrasted with Siddhasena Divākara's *Kalyāṇa-mandira* Stotra, addressed to Pārvīvanātha, which is apparently a deliberate and much more laboured imitation of the *Bhaktāmara* in the same metre and same number (44) of stanzas. Like its prototype, it enjoys a great reputation with both the Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras who claim it as their own ; a fact which indicates that it probably belongs to a comparatively early period. But the reputation of the poem, apart from its devotional value, is hardly commensurate with its inherent poetic, as opposed to merely literary, quality. Siddhasena Divākara is undoubtedly a master of the ornate Kāvya style, but his poem is more artificially constructed than that of Mānatuṅga, and we miss in it the emotional directness which might have redeemed its conventionalities of idea and expression. But whatever their merit is, these two early Jaina hymns become the starting point of a large number of Jaina Stotras of later times, which we shall deal with briefly in their proper place.

To the king-poet Harśavardhana himself are ascribed some Buddhist Stotras of doubtful poetic value, if not of doubtful authorship. Of these, the *Suprabhāta Stotra*, recovered in Sanskrit, is a morning hymn of twenty-four stanzas, addressed to the Buddha and composed chiefly in the Mālinī metre. It has some fine stanzas :

punah prabhātānū punar utthito raviḥ  
 punah śāśāṅkāḥ punar eva śarvarī |  
 mṛtyur jarā janma tathaiva he munc  
 gatāgatim mūḍha-jano na budhyati ||

But the hymn consists really of a string of eulogistic epithets with the refrain :

daśabala tava nityānī suprabhātānī prabhatām ;  
 and its literary excellence need not be unduly exaggerated.

It will be seen from what is said that praise and panegyric very early became the theme of individual poems; they were no longer mere insertions in the Epics, Purāṇas, Tantras or even Kāvyas. By the 7th century A.D. the Stotra established itself as a distinct form of literature, although it still considered itself as a form of Kāvya poetry and affected its method and manner. With the rise of mediaeval sects and cults the number of Stotras naturally multiplied, and became the basis of the living faiths of the people. The larger printed collections of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina Stotra contain more than five hundred separate poems and hymns, but the number of unpublished Stotras noticed in the manuscript collections is indeed very large. An idea of the vastness of the literature may be formed if we take, for instance, the notice of Stotra manuscripts in one only of these collections, namely, that in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras, which covers three big volumes. Most of the Stotras are late and of little literary worth, but they illustrate the enormous quantity as well as diversity of their theme, content and form. Of their devotional feeling there cannot be much doubt; and they are not often merely doctrinal, or abstract, or mannered in the elaborate style of the decadent Kāvya. As expressions of popular and plebeian religious tendencies, they do not involve nor do they demand any elaborate metaphysical or literary preparation. From the point of view of those who believe in an infinitely merciful god, it is absurd to suppose that the god would wait until mankind had reached a particular metaphysical evolution and learned to clothe its praise and prayer in a grammatically and philosophically correct form before he would respond to his fervent appeal for help and guidance. From this standpoint the hymns have often a charming quality, which, however, cannot be appreciated until we realise the entire mentality of the devotee-poets, the earnestness of their creed, and credulity, the exaltation of their pious enthusiasm. But from the literary point of view the Stotras possess a different value. Since their objective is not always poetry, they seldom attain its true accent; for many have attempted but few have succeeded in the exceedingly difficult task of sacred verse. When these devout utterances represent a professional effort, and not a born gift, a systematic exposition of religious

emotions and ideas, and not their automatic fusion in an instinctively poetical and devotional personality, they seldom reach the true character of a great religious poem. It is for this reason, and not altogether unjustly, that the Stotra literature as such never received much recognition from the literary critics, having been almost ignored by Sanskrit Poeticians and Anthologists, who do not give any prominence to the Stotra works nor consider them worthy of a separate treatment. But there can be no doubt that, as a whole, they represent an important phase of Indian literature and deserve detailed and adequate study and appreciation.

Before we close, it would perhaps be convenient to notice here briefly some of the Stotras found in the Purāṇa and Tantra works ; for, inspite of the fact that they are as a rule anonymous and of uncertain date, their stylistic and matrical peculiarities affiliate them with the Kāvya, and most of them are probably compositions of classical times. As a typical insertion, the well known *Durgā-śṭava* in Sloka metre in the *Viśiṣṭa-parvan* (as also in the *Bhīṣma-parvan*) of the *Mahābhārata* may be mentioned. That it is spurious is clear from the fact that it is found only in the Devanāgarī manuscripts ; and besides the Vulgate version, which runs up to more than fifty lines, it exists in as many as six different versions in Devanāgarī manuscripts themselves ! The subject of Purāṇic hymnology has not yet been adequately studied, but it should be clearly understood that although innumerable Stotras, Śata-nāmas and Kavacas occur in the various Purāṇas, Upa-Purāṇas and Tantras, celebrating the particular deities of their respective sects, it would not be possible to enumerate them in detail ; and since they are mostly of a liturgical character, having a greater religious than literary interest, they do not call for such enumeration here. The Purāṇic mythology believed in numberless deities, great or small. But of the greater gods, the earliest direct mention of the Trimūrti (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva) is to be found in the *Hariharātmaka-Śṭava* in Adhy. 184 of the *Harivāraśa*. Here Hari and Hara are not only identical with each other but also with Brahmā. But Brahmā having in later times gone out of sectarian worship (as one of Bhṛgu legends in the *Padma-purāṇa* itself implies), the scheme of Trinity had become more or less formal. On the other hand, the Purāṇic Pañca-devatās-

namely, Āditya, Gaṇanātha, Devī, Rudra and Viṣṇu, receive the greatest homage and appropriate the largest number of hymns. With them come some of their adjuncts, such as the Navagrahas, Kārttikeya, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Hanūmat, Tulasī, the Avatāras of Viṣṇu, the various forms of Devī, the sacred rivers (Gangā, Yamunā, Narmadā) and sacred places of pilgrimage (Kāśī, Prayāga, Puṣkara), and even new deities of popular cults, such as Śaṣṭhī, Śītalā and Manasā. The Purāṇic Āditya is, no doubt, the much modified Sūrya or Savitṛ of Vedic tradition, but with him come not only the minor planets, but also his son, the evil Śani; for belief in the worship of cosmic forces require an appeasement of both the father and the son! Apart from sectarian importance, most of the Purāṇic solar hymns, as compared with the Vedic, are insignificant; but the fairly lengthy *Āditya-hṛdaya*, found in the *Bhavisyottara*, may be mentioned as a curious hymn in which the ritual setting does not altogether obscure the literary and religious appeal. We have a large number of hymns addressed to Gaṇapati, especially in the *Gaṇeśa-Purāṇa*; but, like the solar hymns, they are hardly impressive, with the exception perhaps of a fine Gaṇapati-Stotra in the *Śāradā-lilaka* Tantra (Paṭala xiii) and Gaṇeśa-stava-rāja in *Rudra-yāmala*. Similar hymns to Viṣṇu occur in the Purāṇas like the *Viṣṇu* (Śata-nāma etc.), *Brahmāṇḍa* *Viṣṇu-pañjara-stotra*, *Padma* (Saṅkāṭa-vināśana-stotra; Vāmana-stotra), and *Kalki* (*Viṣṇu-stavarāja*). But the *Śrīmad-bhāgavata* contains some remarkable hymns addressed severally to the individual Avatāras of Viṣṇu, namely, to Matsya (in Śloka), Kūrma (in Upajāti), Varāha (in Vaiśāstavila), Vāmana (in Vasantatilaka) and Nṛsiṁha (in various metres), while the Kṛṣṇa hymns of this Vaiṣṇavite Purāṇa are well known and deservedly popular, especially the very fine Gopī-gītā in the tenth Skandha. In the same way, we have in the *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* several hymns addressed to Rāma, respectively by Ahalyā, Indra, Brahmā and Jaṭāyu. The finer Śaivite hymns are to be found mostly outside the sectarian Purāṇas and Tantras, but there is a Pañcikṣara Śiva-stotra in the *Brahma-yāmala*, a Pradoṣa-stotrāṣṭaka in the *Skanda*, and hymns addressed to Śiva by Asītā and Himālaya in the *Brahmavaivarta*. As a rule the Tantrik hymns to Śakti, such as Stotras to Vagālāmukhī or Dakṣinākālikā, are, apart from Tantric theory and practice, hardly

entertaining ; but the Tripurā-stava in *Prapānicā-sāra*, the Durgā-stava-rāja in *Viśva-sāra*, some of the hymns of the *Devī-bhāgavata* and the *Mārkaṇḍeya-Caṇḍī* are indeed rare exceptions. Most of these Purāṇic hymns have a philosophical or ritualistic background, but what is most interesting in them is the intensity of devout feeling, the elevated mood of prayer and worship, which very often rises to the level of charming poetic utterance. We can do no better than close this necessarily imperfect sketch with quoting two Bhujāṅgaprayāta stanzas from the short Brahma-stotra (five stanzas), found in the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*<sup>1</sup>, in which the spirit of prayer in an exalted Vedāntic mood finds beautiful expression :

Namas te sate sarva-lokāśrayā  
 namas te cite viśva-rūpātmakāya |  
 namo'dvaita-tattvāya mukti-pradāya  
 namo brahmaṇe vyāpīne nirguṇāya ||

tad ekāṁ smarāṁas tad ekāṁ bhajāmas  
 tad ekāṁ jagat-sākṣi-rūpāṁ namāmaḥ |  
 tad ekāṁ nidhānam̄ nirālambam̄ iśāṁ  
 bhavāmbhodhi-potāṁ śaranyāṁ vrajāmaḥ

As a contrast to this would stand the erotic emotionalism of the passionate song of the Gopīs in the *Śrimad-bhāgavata*, from which, in conclusion, we quote here a few stanzas (x.31, abridged) :

jayati te'dhikāṁ janmanā vrajāḥ śrayata indirā śāśvad atra hi  
 dayita dṛṣyatāṁ dikṣu tāvakaś tvayi dhṛtāsavaś tvāṁ vicinbate ||  
 śarad-udāśaye sādhu-jāta-sat-sarasijodara-śrī-muṣā dṛṣā ||  
 surata-nātha te'sulka-dāśikā varada nighnato neha kiṁ vadhaḥ ||  
 praṇata-dehināṁ pāpa-karṣaṇāṁ tṛṇa-carānugraḥ śrī-niketanāṁ ||  
 phāṇi-phāṇārpitāṁ te padāmbujāṁ kṛṇu kuceśu naḥ  
 kṛndhi hṛcchayān ||  
 surata-vardhanāṁ śoka-nāśanāṁ svarita-veṇunā  
 suṣṭhu cumbitam ||  
 itara-rāga-vismāraṇāṁ nṛṇāṁ vitara vīra nas te'dharāmytam ||  
 rahasi saṁvidāṁ hṛcchayodayāṁ  
 prahasitānānāṁ prema-vīkṣanām ||

<sup>1</sup> This, however, is a late work suspected to have been composed in the first half of the 19th century.

bṛhad-urah śriyo vikṣya dhāma te  
muḥur ati-sphṛhā muhyate manah ||

We shall see that these two different trends of thought and emotion persist and become prominent in the later history of Stotra literature in two distinctly divergent streams.

## II

The later history of Stotra literature presents two lines of development, which sometimes blend but which stand in no constant relation. On the one hand, we have a continuation of the earlier tradition of the literary Stotra of a descriptive-eulogistic character, sometimes taking the form of Pañcaka, Aṣṭaka, Daśaka or even Śataka, and constituting an unobtrusive wing of the Kāvya itself. This form was utilised by the exponents and teachers of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina faiths of later times, as well as by scholars and poets who did not identify themselves explicitly with any particular sect or cult. Fostered in the cloisters or in literary circles, this type of Stotra became in course of time more and more imbued with scholastic learning or speculative thought. The Purānic Stotra, no doubt, stood apart and had a different origin, while its appeal was more distinctly popular; but we have seen that these compositions of uncertain date and authorship came in course of time to bear the literary or scholastic stamp, and became, when they were not merely liturgical, almost undistinguishable from the purely literary Stotras. But we have also, on the other hand, the steady development of a highly emotional type of Stotras, which evolved a new literary form for direct popular appeal by allying itself, more or less, with song, dance and music, and very often passed through the whole gamut of sensuous and erotic motif, imagery and expression. The personal note is present in both the tendencies; but while in the one it is expressed in the guise of sedate religious thought, in the other it is shaped and coloured by fervent religious emotion. The intellectual satisfaction and moral earnestness, which characterise the earlier theistic devotionalism, inspire the high-toned traditional Stotras; but with the rise of mediaeval sects and propagation of emotional Bhakti movements, the basic inspiration of devotional writings is

supplied, more or less, by a mood of erotic mysticism, which seeks to express intense religious longings in the intimate language and imagery of earthly passion. This brings us to a new development in Sanskrit religious poetry, which relates it very closely to erotic literature, so much so that poems like the *Gita-govinda* would appear, from different aspects, both as a religious and an erotic work. The mighty sex-impulse becomes transfigured into a deeply religious emotion; and however mystic and dangerously sensuous the new devotional attitude may appear, the literary gain was immense and beyond question. While the older and more orthodox tradition begets a fresh series of grave, elevated and speculative hymns, the emotional and poetic possibilities of the newer quasi-amorous attitude become great and diverse, and express themselves in mystically passionate hymns, poems and songs. In the hands of the erotico-religious emotionalists, we have a fresh accession and interpretation of the romantic legends of the gods; and the wistfulness, amazement and ecstasy of the new devotional sentiment lift its hymnology and poetry from the dry dogmatism of scholastic thought into a picturesque and luscious spiritualisation of sensuous words and ideas.

These effusions of the devout heart, whether speculative or emotional, are in a sense beyond criticism; but strictly speaking, they do not always attain a high level of poetic excellence. They spring, no doubt, from the depth of religious conviction; but composed generally that they are for the purpose of a particular cult or sect, they are often weighted down with its theological or philosophical ideas. When they are not of this didactic type, or when they do not merely give a string of laudatory names and epithets of deities, or when they are not merely liturgical verses, they possess the moving quality of attractive religious poems. The more the devotional sentiment becomes personal in ardour and concrete in expression, the more the pedantry of its theology and psychological rhetoric recedes to the background, and the hymns are lifted to the idealism and romantic richness of intensely passionate expression. These hymns and poems alone come within the sphere of literary, and not merely religious, appreciation. We have seen that the number of Stotras preserved is indeed vast, and only a small percentage of them is yet in print; but even those which

have been published are mostly of unknown or late date, and whatever be their religious interest, their individual poetic traits are not always conspicuous. They are very often burdened with didactic or doctrinal matter, or with a dry recital of commonplace words and ideas ; only a few of them rise to the level of mediocre poems. No adequate study of the nature and extent of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina hymnology has yet been made, but it is clear that no other department of Sanskrit verse has been so prolific and diverse, and that it would be unjust to ignore the Stotras as mere curiosities, even if Sanskrit rhetorical and anthological literature displays no special enthusiasm for them. A good case may indeed be made that, apart from religious significance, the Stotra literature deserves a deeper investigation for its purely literary worth. But at the same time it is not necessary that religious bias should unduly exaggerate its literary importance. Some of the hymns are undoubtedly popular and have been uttered by thousands of devout minds from generation to generation, but mere popularity or liturgical employment is no index to literary quality. They are popular, not because they are great religious poems of beauty, but because they give expression to cherished religious ideas. They are concerned more with religion than religious emotion, and have, therefore, different values for the Bhakta and the Sahṛdaya, the devotee and the literary critic.

But religious hymnology was a wide, congenial and fruitful field in which the Indian mind at no period ceased to exercise itself. Not only the active impetus of speculative thought or scholastic learning but also the different religious tendencies of the mediaeval age imparted a variety of theme and content, as well as form and expression to the bulk of its Sanskrit hymns. We have, for instance, the large number of Vedāntic Stotras some of which are ascribed to the great Śaṅkara himself, the Kashmirian Śaivite poems, the Jaina and Buddhist Mahāyāna hymns, the South Indian Vaiṣṇava and Śaivite panegyric of deities, or the Bengal Tāntric and Vaiṣṇava eulogiums. It thus becomes a vast, varied and difficult subject, of which only a cursory survey can be given here.

The later Buddhist Stotras are true to the manner and diction of Hindu Stotras, the only difference lying in the mode and object of adoration. Some of them choose the ornate dic-

tion and elaborate metres of the Kāvya, while others are litanies of the type common in the Purāṇa. The *Lokeśvara* Śataka of Vajradatta, who lived under Devapāla in the 9th century, is composed in the elaborate Sragdharā metre, describing the physical features and mental excellence of Avalokiteśvara, obviously on the model of the Śatakas of Mayūra and Bāṇa; and tradition has also invented a similar legend of the poet's being cured of leprosy by this eulogy of the deity! We have a mention not only of the glory and mercy of the deity but also of his fifty names; and he is described in great detail from his fingers to his toes in accordance with the well established tradition of Stotra-writers. In the same Sragdharā metre and polished diction is composed a large number of Stotras to Tārā, who is the female counterpart to Avalokiteśvara but who is absorbed into later Hindu pantheon as an aspect of Sakti. As many as ninety-six Buddhist texts relating to Tārā are mentioned, but of these the *Ārya-tārā-sragdharā stotra*, in thirty-seven verses, of the Kashmirian Survajñāmitra who lived in the first half of the 8th century, is perhaps the most remarkable. The *Bhakti-śataka* of Rāmacandra Kavibhāratī of Bengal, who came to Ceylon, became a Buddhist and lived under king Parākramabāhu at about 1245 A.D. is of some interest as an example of the application of Hindu ideas of Bhakti to an extravagant eulogy of the Buddha, composed in the approved Kāvya style and diction. It is not necessary to deal with later Mahāyāna Stotras, which are numerous but which show little poetic merit, nor with the Dhāraṇīs or protective spells in which Mahāyāna literature abounds and which form a counterpart of the Mantras of Hindu origin.

The Jaina Stotras, commencing with the *Bhaktāmara* of Mānatunga and *Kalyāṇa-mandira* of his imitator Siddhasena Divākara, are large in number; but they also exhibit the same form, style and characteristics, and therefore need not detain us long. Among several other imitations of *Bhaktāmara* Stotra, the more remarkable is the *Nemi-bhaktāmara* of Bhāvaprabha Sūri, which alludes to the legend of Neminātha and Rājamatī. There are several *Ajita-śānti-stava*, both in Sanskrit and Prakrit, e.g., by Nandisena (earlier than the 9th century), Jina-vallabha (12th century), Jayaśekhara and Śānticandra Gāṇi (16th century), which celebrate Ajita, the second, and Śānti,

the sixteenth Tīrthāṅkara, Vidyānandin wrote the elaborate *Pātrakeśari-stotra*, in fifty stanzas, in praise of Jina Mahāvīra, who is eulogised also by several other writers. Besides eulogies of particular saints or Jinas, there is quite a number of Stotras, generally known as *Caturvīṁśati-jina-stuti* or *Caturvīṁśikā*, in which all the twenty-four Jinas are extolled. Such Stotras are composed by well known devotees and teachers, such as Samantabhadra (c. first half of the 8th century), Bappabhattī (c. 743-838), Śobhana (second half of the 10th century), Jina-prabha Sūri (beginning of the 14th century) and others. As glorification of Jinas and saints does not admit of much variation of subject-matter, some poems are artificially constructed to show various tricks of language in the use of Yamaka and other rhetorical figures on the regular model of the Kāvya; while others contain religious reflections and instructions, which conduce little towards literature proper. In his *Siddhipriya-stotra*, for instance, Devanandi, who is probably not identical with the old Pūjyapāda, employs Anya-yamaka in the same order of syllables over nearly half the foot in two consecutive Vasantatilaka feet of each stanza. The following stanza quoted from the poem will serve as a specimen of its style and diction :

yasmin vibhāti kala-hanīsa-ravair aśokas  
chindyāt sa bhinna-bhava-matsara-vaira-śokah ||  
devo'bhinandana-jino guru me'gha-jālam  
śampeva parvata-taṭām guru-megha-jālam ||

In the same way, Śobhana in his *Caturvīṁśati-jina-stuti* (also called *Śobhana-stuti* with an obvious pun) not only employs a large number of metres in its ninety-six stanzas, but also constructs his verses in such a way that the entire second and fourth feet of each verse have the same order of syllables. Sometimes the poems are what is called Śaḍ-bhāṣā-nirmita, each stanza being written in a different language, the six languages being Sanskrit, Māhārāṣṭri, Māgadhi, Śaursenī, Paiśācī, and Apabhramśa. Such Stotras, for instance, are the *Pāśva-jina-stavana* by Dharmavardhana and the *Śāntinātha-stavana* by Jinapadma (first half of the 14th century). Some of the Stotras, again, have a distinctly instructive or philosophical colouring, such as the *Eki-bhāva-stotra* and the *Jñāna-locana stotra* of Vādirāja (about 1025

A.D.). The famous *Vitarāga-stotra* of the great Ācārya Hema-candra, written at the request of king Kumārapāla, is ostensibly a poem in praise of Mahāvīra, the Passionless One, but it is also a poetical manual of Jaina doctrine, divided into twenty Prakāśas or sections of generally eight to ten Slokas, written in the direct and forcible language of knowledge and adoration.

Of the Hindu Stotras it is difficult to say if all the two-hundred Vedāntic Stotras, which pass current under the name of the great Vedāntic philosopher Śaṅkarācārya, are rightly ascribed; but there is no reason to suppose that not one of them came from him. The obvious sectarian bias of some of them does not rule out his authorship, for devotion to a particular deity is not inconsistent with the profession of severe monistic idealism; while some, again, are commented upon by more than one reliable and fairly old scholiast. It is possible that the majority of these Stotras were composed by later Śaṅkaras of the Saṃpradāya or even passed off under his name; but since there is no criterion, except that of style and treatment, at best unsafe guides, one can never be positive on the question. Some of these Stotras, however, are undoubtedly inspired by religious enthusiasm and attain a charming quality of tender expression, inspite of occasional philosophical or didactic background. Such for instance, are the *Śivāparādha-kṣamāpana* in Sragdhara; the *Dvādaśa-pañjariikā* (commonly known as the *Moha-mudgara*) and the very similar *Carpaṇa-pañjariikā* (*Bhaja-Govindam*) Stotra, both in rhymed metric metre; the several short Stotras in Bhujāṅgapravṝyāta, namely, the *Daśa-slokī* (or *Nirvāṇa-daśaka*), *Ātma-śatka* (or *Nirvāṇa-śatka*), *Vedasāra-śiva-stuti*; and the shorter *Ānanda-laharī* in twenty Śikhariṇī stanzas. As most of these Stotras are well known, it is not necessary to give quotations here. Not only ease and elegance of expression, but also the smooth flow of metre and use of rhyme make these deservedly popular Stotras occupy a high rank in Sanskrit Stotra literature. The *Śat-paṭī* or *Viṣṇu-śat-paṭī* in six Āryā stanzas, in which occur the well known lines:

saty api bhedāpagame nātha tavāhaṇi na māmakīnas tvam |  
sāmudro hi taraṅgah kvacana samudro na tāraṅgah ||

or the much longer *Harim-Īḍe* Stotra in forty-three Mattāmāyūra stanzas are composed in less musical and more difficult metres

and are more distinctly doctrinal, the former naturally claiming more than half a dozen commentaries, and the latter being honoured with scholia written by Vidyāraṇya, Svayamprakāśa, Ānandagiri and even Śaṅkara himself!

But there is also a large number of other Stotras ascribed to Śaṅkara. Their form and content, however, are of somewhat stereotyped nature; and not being vouched for by any old author or commentary, their authenticity is extremely doubtful. We have, for instance, some fifteen Stotras in Bhujāṅgaprāyātā, addressed to a variety of deities like Gaṇeśa, Dakṣināmūrti, Devī, Bhavānī, Nṛsiṁha, Rāma, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sāmba, Subrahmanyā, Datta, Hanūmat, Gaṇḍakī and so forth. The Aṣṭakas, written in a larger variety of metres and addressed to a larger variety of gods, are counted as more than thirty-five, such as those relating to Acyuta, Annapūrṇā, Ambā, Ardhanārīśvara, Kāla-Bhairava, Kṛṣṇa, Gaṅgā, Gaṇeśa, Govinda, Cidānanda, Jagannātha, Tripurasundarī, Dakṣināmūrti, Narmadā, Pāṇḍurāṅga, Bāla-kṛṣṇa, Bindu-mādhava, Bhavānī, Bhairava, Maṇikarnikā, Yamunā, Rāghava, Rāma, Liṅga, Bhramarāmbā, Sāradāmbā, Śiva, Śrīcakra, Sahajā, Hara-gaurī and Hālāsyā. We have also longer Śakti hymns to Annapūrṇā, Kālī, Śyāmā, Pārvatī, Mātaṅgī, Jvālā-mukhī, Kāmākṣī, Mīnākṣī, Lalitā and Rājarājeśvarī; Vaiṣṇava hymns to Hari, Mukunda, Nārāyaṇa, Nṛsiṁha and Cakrapāṇi; Śaiva hymns to Mṛtyuñjaya, Maheśvara, and Pañcā-vaktra; besides hymns to holy places and sacred rivers. In addition to the Aparādhā-kṣamāpana Stotra to Śiva, there are two other Kṣamāpana hymns addressed respectively to Devī and Kālī. There are at least three hymns in which the traditional head-to-foot description of deities occurs; four hymns concerning Śodaśopacara or Catuh-ṣaṣṭyupacāra Pūjā; over twelve hymns on Mānasa-pūjā addressed chiefly to the unembodied Ātman. Thus, almost all important sects and schools of opinion are practically represented in the fairly comprehensive number of more than two hundred Stotras attributed to the great Ācārya, but it is difficult to believe that all or most of them belong really to him. An exception however, has been made in favour of two of these, namely, the *Dakṣināmūrti Aṣṭaka* and *Gopāla Aṣṭaka*. Although the former consists of ten (or even fifteen) stanzas in Śārdūlavikrīḍita metre, it is often styled an Aṣṭaka; and not only Śaṅkara himself but also

Sureśvara, Vidyāranya, Svayamprakāśa, Pūrṇānanda and Nārāyaṇatīrtha are credited with commentaries on this well-known hymn; while the *Gopālāśṭaka*, not so well reputed, is honoured at least by a commentary attributed to Ānandatīrtha. Whether spurious or genuine, there can be no doubt that some of these Śāṅkarite Stotras form a special class of Vedānta literature and enjoy, not only on this account but also on account of their devotional feeling and expression, wide and unparalleled popularity.

Other earlier Hindu Stotras are, in the same way, of uncertain date and origin; but some of them are fine devotional hymns of deserved popularity. The peculiarly titled *Śivamahimnāḥ Stotram* of Puṣpadanta, however, is cited by Rājāśekhara in his *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* and the Kashmirian Jayanta-bhaṭṭa in his *Nyāya-māñjari*, and therefore, it must be earlier than the 10th century A.D. It is a fine but erudite poem, which, if we leave aside the eleven concluding Phala-śruti verses in different metres, consists of about thirty Śikharīṇī stanzas. Although the author himself disclaims what is called Ku-tarka:

kim-īhāḥ kīh-kāyah sa khalu kim-upāyas tribhuvanaṁ  
kim-ādhāro dhātā srajati kim-upādāna iti ca |  
atarkyaśvarya tvayyanavasara-duḥstho hata-dhiyah  
kutarko'yaṁ kāmścīn mukharayati mohāya jagataḥ ||

and in the diversity of conflicting views he surrenders himself unreservedly to the grace of his deity:

.trayī sāmkhyam yogah paśupati-mataṁ vaiśṇavam iti  
prabhinne prasthāne param idam adah pathyam iti ca |  
rucinām vaicitryād ṛju-kuṭila-nānā-patha-juṣān  
nṛnām eko gamyas tvam asi payasām arṇava iva ||

Yet, as the numerous learned commentaries on the hymn attest, it is no less recondite and philosophical both in thought and expression. Although the hymn is interpreted so as to apply to Viṣṇu as well, it became, through its popularity, the precursor of other Mahimnāḥ Stotras in praise of other deities. Thus, we have a *Ganapati-mahimnāḥ Stotra*, also composed in Śikharīṇī metre (30 stanzas) and sometimes ascribed to Puṣpadanta himself, a longer *Tripurā-mahimnāḥ Stotra*, in a variety of metres (56 stanzas) attributed to Durvāsas, and a

*Viṣṇu-mahimnaḥ Stotra* in the Śikhariṇī metre (32 stanzas), written by Brahmānanda Svāmin. We have a similar series of short morning hymns (*Prātaḥ-smarāṇa Stotras*), all of which begin with the words *prātaḥ smarāmi*, and consist of three to six Vasantatilaka stanzas. Three of them addressed respectively to Gaṇeśa, Śiva and Caṇḍī are given in *Saddharma-cintāmaṇi*; three addressed similarly to Sūrya, Rāma and Para-brahma are anonymous, while one addressed to Viṣṇu is quoted in the *Ācāra-mayūkha* and ascribed to Vyāsa. As a specimen we might quote from the last hymn (three stanzas), which is perhaps the least known but which in its contemplation of Brahman rises to the height of Vedāntic thought:

prātaḥ smarāmi hṛdi saṁspurad ātma-tat्त्वाम  
sat-cit-sukhaṁ parama-hamīsa-gatīm turīyam |  
yat svapna-jāgara-suṣuptam avaimi nityam  
tad brahma niṣkalam aham na ca bhūta-samghaḥ ||

pratar bhajāmi manaso vacasām agamyam  
vāco vibhānti nikhilā yad-anugraheṇa |  
yan neti neti vacanair nigamā avocain  
tāṁ deva-devam ajam acyutam āhur agryam ||

prātar namāmi tamasaḥ param arka-varṇam  
pūrṇam sanātana-padarūpūrṇam puruṣottamākhyam |  
yasmīn idam jagad aśeṣam aśeṣa-mūrttau  
rajjvāni bhujaṁgama iva pratibhāsitam vai ||

We have a similar series of *Mānasā-pūjā Stotras* dedicated to various deities, and another series of minute head-to-foot description of the physical features (pādādi-keśānta-paryanta-varṇana) of the adored gods, to which may be added the series of Śata-nāma or Sahasra-nāma Stotras, which are nothing more than litanies of a hundred or thousand sacred names stringed together for daily repetition.

Many of the apparently late Stotras are dateless and apocryphal, but they are ascribed indiscriminately to Yājñavalkya, Vyāsa, Vālmīki, Vasīṣṭha, Rāvaṇa, Upamanyu, Durvāsas and even Kālidāsa. Even if their intrinsic merit may not justify such attribution, some of them are undoubtedly fine hymns. Such, for instance is the short literary piece, the

*Suryāryā-stotra* or *Ravi-gāthā* in nine Āryā stanzas, attributed to Yājñavalkya. As its first verse :

śuka-tuṇḍa-cchavi savitūś caṇḍa-ruceḥ puṇḍarīka-vana-bandhoḥ |  
maṇḍalam uditam vande kuṇḍalam ākhaṇḍalāśayāḥ ||

is quoted anonymously in the *Kavīndra-vacana-samuccaya*, it should be dated earlier than the 10th century; but the verse is ascribed to Vidyā in *Sadukti-karṇāmyta* and to Nāgāmmā in *Śārṅgadhara-paddhati*! The *Nava-graha-stotra*, also ascribed to Vyāsa, is rather a conventional litany which systematically devotes nine Anuṣṭubh stanzas respectively to the nine planets, but it begins with the well known *Sūrya-namaskriyā* :

japā-kuṣuma-sarṅkāśāḥ kāśyapeyāḥ mahādyutin |  
dvāntāriṁ sarva-pāpa-ghnāḥ prāṇato'smi divākaram ||

Similarly, the *Rāmāṣṭakam*, also ascribed to Vyāsa, gives in eight Pramāṇikā stanzas, a string of pious epithets in eulogy of Rāma, with the refrain : bhaje ha rāmam advayam. Vasiṣṭha has to his credit a similar *Dāridrya-dahanā* *Śiva-stotra* composed in eight Vasantatilaka stanzas with the refrain :

dāridrya-duḥkha-dahanāya namaḥ śivāya.

But a greater claim to literary, as well as devotional, value can be made by the fine *Śiva-stotra* ascribed to Upamanyu. It is a short piece in twenty Sundarī or Viyoginī stanzas—a metre rarely used in Stotra literature; but not only the musical metre but also its simple and forcible expression makes it an attractive religious hymn. As the hymn is perhaps not so well known, we quote from it to illustrate our point :

tvad-anusmṛtir eva pāvanī stuti-yuktā na hi vaktum iśa sā |  
madhuram hi payaḥ svabhāvato nanu kīdṛk sita-śarkarānvitam ||  
sa-viśo'pyamṛtāyate bhavāñ chava-muṇḍābharano'pi pāvanah |  
bhava eva bhavāntakah satāḥ sama-dṛṣṭir viṣamekṣaṇo'pi san ||  
kva dṛśam vidadhāmi kīrṇi karomy anutīṣṭhāmi

kathām bhayākulaḥ

kva nu tiṣṭhasi rakṣa rakṣa mām ayi śambho śarangato'smi te ||

But this well-expressed and easy flow of devotional feeling is perhaps not so clear in two more ambitious Stotras, namely, the *Śiva-tāṇḍava* and the *Śiva-stuti*, attributed respectively to

Rāvaṇa and Laṅkeśvara. Both are short poems of 14 and 10 stanzas respectively, but both are artificially constructed in the ornate style and diction, composed in the more difficult and less musical Pañcacāmara and Pṛthvī metres respectively. One specimen from each would be enough :

navīna-megha-maṇḍali-niruddha-durdhara-sphurat-  
kuhū-niśīthīnī-tamah-prabandha-bandhu-kandharah |  
nilimpa-nirjhari-dharas tanotu kṛtti-sundarāḥ  
kalā-nidhāna-bandhurah śriyām jagad-dhurām-dharah ||

(*Śiva-tāṇḍava*, st. 7)

vṛṣopari-parispurad-dhavala-dhāma dhāma śriyām  
kubera-giri-gaurima-prabhava-garva-nirvāsi tat |  
kvacit punar umā-kucopacita-kuṇkumai rañjitañ  
gajājina-virājitañ vṛjina-bhaṅga-bījaiḥ bhaje ||

(*Śiva-stuti*, st. 2)

There are, again, several Stotras addressed to the river-goddess Gaṅgā, attributed respectively to Vālmīki, Kālidāsa, Śāṅkara and curiously enough, to a Muslim poet named Darāf Khān. The first two are Aṣṭakas in Śārdūlavikṛidita ; and even if the attribution to Vālmīki and Kālidāsa may be questioned, they show considerable literary, if not poetic, gift. The Śāṅkarite hymn in fourteen Pajjhātiķā stanzas, beginning with :

devi sureśvari bhagavati gaṅge  
tribhuvana-tārīṇi tarala-taraṅge |

is much better known, but it does not rise much above the level of a devotional litany. The Darāf Khān Stotra is a short production of seven or eight stanzas in different metres. As it is comparatively little known, we quote here the first two stanzas :

yat tyaktam jananī-gaṇair yad api na sprṣṭam suhṛd-bāndhavaīḥ  
yaśmin pāntha-dṛganta-sarīnipatite taiḥ smaryate śri-hariḥ |  
svāṅke nyasya tad idṛśam vapur aho svīkurvatī pauruṣam  
tvam tāvat karuṇāparāyaṇa-parā mātāsi bhāgīrathī ||

acyuta-caraṇa-taraṅgiṇi ūṣi-śekhara-mauli-mālatī-māle |  
tvayi tanu-vitarāṇa-samaye deyā haratā na me haritā ||

It will be seen that in the last stanza the poet desires not Viṣṇutva but Śivatva because he would not like to have the

Gangā rolling at his feet but held on his head ! This conceit, though striking, is typical of such literary compositions.

It is not necessary to notice any more apocryphal Stotras of this type ; but the avowedly literary Śatakas, which carry on the tradition of Bāṇa and Mayūra, are within greater historical certainty. Most of them are elaborately constructed with greater literary than devotional pretension, and sometimes attempt conventional tricks of style which diminish their value as Stotras proper. An exception, however, must be made in favour of the deservedly popular *Mukunda-mālā* of the devout Vaiṣṇava king Kulaśekhara of Kerala, which is perhaps one of the earliest and best of such literary compositions. It is a short poem of thirty-four eulogistic stanzas composed in a variety of lyrical measures. Even if it has some stylistic affectations, they are mostly redeemed by its unmistakable devotional earnestness as well as by a proper sense of style. The Vaiṣṇava idea of Prapatti (surrender) and Prasāda (grace) finds a fine expression in the poet's fervent adoration of his beloved deity :

nāsthā dharne na vasu-nicaye naiva kāmopabhoge  
 yad bhāvyaih tad bhavatu bhagavan pūrva-karmānurūpam |.  
 etat prārthyam mama bahu-matāḥ janma-janmāntare'pi  
 tvat-pādāmbhoruha-yuga-gatā niścalā bhaktir astu ||

divi vā bhuvi vā māmāstu vāso narake vā narakāntaka  
 prakāmam | :  
 avadhīrīta-śīradāravindau caraṇau te maraṇe'pi cintayāmi ||

baddhenāñjalinā natena śirasā gātraiḥ sa-romodgamaīḥ  
 kañṭhena svara-gadgadena nayanenodgīrṇa-bāspāmbunā |  
 nityāṁ tvac-caraṇāravinda-yugala-dhyānāṁṛtāsvādināṁ  
 asmākāṁ sarasīruhākṣa satātāṁ sampādyatāṁ jīvitam ||

The same high praise cannot, however, be accorded to other South Indian hymns of later times, nor to the Kashmirian Śaivite poems of a devotional character. The twenty short hymns, for instance, of Utpaladeva of Kashmir (c. 925 A.D.), are uneven, some being elaborate in the conventional literary manner. The earlier *Devi-śataka* of Ānandavardhana (c. 850 A.D.) and *Īvara-śataka* of Avatāra of unknown date are stupid Durghaṭa poems, with verbal tricks and Citra-bandhas, so wisely condemned by Ānandavardhana himself in his work

on Poetics. The *Vakrokti-pañcāśikā* of Ratnākara, which makes the playful love of Śiva and Pārvatī its theme, is a similar exercise in style, illustrating the clever use of punning ambiguities in the employment of the verbal figure *Vakrokti* in fifty Śārdūlavikṛīdita stanzas. It has little religious leaning, but perhaps the poet fondly felt that as men delight in these verbal tricks so would the gods find pleasure in them! The *Ardha-nārīvara-stotra* of Kahlaṇa, a short piece of eighteen Śārdūlavikṛīdita stanzas, is much better in this respect, notwithstanding its partiality for alliteration. The *Sāmba-pañcāśikā*, an eulogy of the sun-god in fifty, (mostly *Mandākrāntā*) verses, is also probably a Kashmirian work, being commented upon by Kṣemarāja in the beginning of the 13th century; but it is referred to the mythical Sāmba, son of Kṛṣṇa, even if it is an apparently late and laboured work having a background of Kashmirian Śaiva philosophy.

From the later Stotras of a literary character, all of which show, more or less, technical skill of the conventional kind but sometimes rise to fine words and ideas, it is difficult to single out works of really outstanding excellence. The *Nārāyaṇīya* of Nārāyaṇa-bhaṭṭa of Kerala, composed in 1585 A.D. is a devout but highly artificial poem of a thousand learned verses, divided symmetrically into ten decades and addressed to the deity Kṛṣṇa of Guruvayoor, who is said to have cured the author of rheumatism after listening to the verses! The shorter *Ananda-laharī* of twenty Śikhariṇī stanzas mentioned above has perhaps a better claim to being mentioned as a devotional hymn of quite laudable literary effort, even if it may not have been composed by the great Śaṅkara. Another anonymous *Asṭaka* to Jagannātha, sometimes ascribed to Caitanya of Bengal, which contains the refrain :

jagannāthah svāmī nayana-patha-gāmī bhavatu me

is a fine lyric of eight Śikhariṇī stanzas which, inspite of its small size, deserves mention in this connection. The more ambitious *Ananda-mandākinī* of the well known Bengal philosopher Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, who flourished at the middle of the 16th century, is a similar production in praise of Kṛṣṇa, in 102 sonorous Śārdūlavikṛīdita stanzas, in which both the learning and devoutness of the author express themselves equally

well in a highly ornate style. The same remarks apply to a number of 17th century productions, such as the five *Laharis* (namely, *Amṛta*°, *Sudhā*°, *Gāṅgā*°, *Karuṇā*° and *Lakṣmī*°) of Jagannātha, the poet-rhetorician from Tailaṅga; the *Ānanda-sāgara-stava* of Nilakanṭha Dīkṣita in praise of the goddess Mīnākṣī, consort of Sundaranātha Śiva of Madura; the *Sudarśana-sātaka* of Kūra-Nārāyaṇa in praise of Viṣṇu's discus, and the three long stilted panegyrics (each containing over a hundred stanzas) of Rāma's weapons (*Rāmāṣṭaprāsa* in Sārdūlavikrīḍita, *Rāma-cāpa-stava* in the same metre and *Rāma-bāṇa-stava* in Sragdharā) by Nilakanṭha's pupil Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita, who also perpetrated an absurdity of alphabetically arranged eulogy of the same deity, called *Varna-mālā* Stotra. These are really Kāvyas rather than Stotras proper, or at best Stotra-kāvyas, and should be taken as such. As mythology concerning various deities forms the theme of a large number of later ornate Kāvyas, the devotional poems as such should be distinguished from them. Works like the *Hara-vijaya* of Ratnākara, *Śrīkauṇīha-carita* of Maṅkhaka, *Nārāyaṇānanda* of Vastupāla, *Yādavābhūyudaya* of Veṅkaṭa Deśika, *Śiva-līlārṇava* of Nilakanṭha Dīkṣita, *Hari-vilāsa* of Lolumbarāja, *Govinda-līlāmṛtā* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, or *Bhikṣātana* of Utprekṣavallabha, to name only a few at random, can be regarded as no more religious poems than the *Buddha-carita* of Aśvaghoṣa, *Kumāra-saṁbhava* of Kālidāsa, *Kirātārjunīya* of Bhāravi or *Śiśupāla-vadha* of Māgha. To the same class belongs the large number of benedictory or laudatory verses, which are culled from classical poems and dramas by anthologists and rhetoricians, although some of them do contain fervent appeals to deities.

One of the noteworthy features of some of the literary Stotras is that they give a highly sensuous description of the love-adventures of the deities, or a detailed enumeration of their physical charms, masculine or feminine, with considerable erotic flavour. This may be one form of the mediaeval erotic mysticism, of which we shall speak presently; but apart from the sports of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, where such delineation is perhaps not out of place, there is a tendency, commencing from the tradition of *Kumāra-saṁbhava* viii, to ascribe sexual attributes to divine beings or paint their amours with lavish details. The gentle description of the love of deities, like those found in the benedictory

stanzas of the *Ratnāvalī* or *Priyadarśikā*, does not exceed good taste ; but some poets like to describe their deities in particularly dubious amorous situations. On the other hand, we have the description of the divine limbs of Viṣṇu, Śiva or Śakti from the head to the toe-nail ; and even the footwear of the deity—a curious instance of foot-fetichism—becomes an object of eulogy in a thousand verses in the *Padukā-sahasra* of Venkāṭa Dēśīka ! Müka Kavi, alleged to have been a contemporary of Śaṅkara, attempts in his *Pañca-śatī* a *tour de force* in five hundred erotico-religious verses, describing in each century of verse such physical charms and attributes of his deity (Kāmākṣī of Kāñci) as her smile, her side-long glances, her lotus-feet and so forth. The climax is reached in Lakṣmaṇa Ācārya's *Caṇḍī-kuca-pañcāśikā*, which describes in more than fifty verses the glory and beauty of Caṇḍī's breasts, albeit they are described as the breasts of the mother-goddess ! This growing sensuous attitude naturally brings us to the consideration of the other line of development of Sanskrit Stotra literature, namely, to the Stotras of a distinctly emotional and erotico-mystic type, to which we shall now turn our attention.

### III

We now come to the other series of mediaeval devotional Stotra, which marks a departure from the tradition of literary and reflective Stotra, of which the Vedāntic hymns ascribed to Śaṅkara may be taken as the type, by their erotico-mystic sensibility and by their more passionate and sensuous content and expression. We have already said that these erotico-devotional Stotras and short poems give expression to a phase of the mediaeval Bhakti movement, which was prominently emotional, and base the religious sentiment, mystically, upon the exceedingly familiar and authentic intensity of transfigured sex-passion. In other words, the basic inspiration here is not speculative thought, as in the case of Saṅkarite Stotras, but a quasi-amorous attitude which transforms the mighty sex-impulse into an ecstatic religious emotion, and thereby relates the devotional literature very closely to the erotic, by expressing religious longings in the intimate language and imagery of earthly passion. However figuratively or philosophically the hymns and poems may be interpreted, there can be no doubt that they

make erotic emotionalism their refined and sublimated essence. But the Bhakti movement, in all its sectarian ramifications, centres chiefly round the early romantic life of Kṛṣṇa as it is described, not in the Epic, but in the Purāṇas. No doubt, the sentiment of Bhakti came to be applied occasionally to other deities as well, including even the Buddha; and the *Bhikṣātana Kāvya* of Gokula or Śivadāsa (better known by his title Utprekṣā-vallabha), which describes Śiva's wandering about as a mendicant for alms and the feelings of the Apsarasas of Indra's heaven at his approach, places the austere and terrible god in a novel and interesting erotic surrounding. But the mediaeval Kṛṣṇa-Gopī legend had perhaps the greatest erotic possibilities, which were developed to the fullest extent; for in the case of Śiva or the Buddha, there was no tradition of a youthful saviour, as there was in the case of Kṛṣṇa, on which quasi-erotic ideas could easily centre.

The new movement, therefore, was chiefly concerned with the mediaeval Vaiṣṇava sects who adored Kṛṣṇa, especially the youthful Kṛṣṇa. The *Śrīmad-bhāgavata*, as the great Vaiṣṇava scripture of emotional devotion and store-house of romantic Kṛṣṇa-legends became the starting point of the theology of neo-Vaiṣṇava sects and supplied the basic inspiration to the new devotional poetry. Contrasted with the *Hari-vākya* and the *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*, the *Bhāgavata* scarcely deals with the entire life of Kṛṣṇa, but concentrates all its strength upon his boyhood and youth. With the youthful Kṛṣṇa at the centre, it weaves its peculiar theory and practice of intensely personal and passionate Bhakti, which is somewhat different from the exalted and speculative Bhakti of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Although Rādhā is not mentioned, the Gopīs figure prominently in the romantic legend, and their dalliance with Kṛṣṇa is described in highly emotional and sensuous terms. The utter self-abandonment of the Gopīs, the romantic love of the mistress for her lover, becomes the accepted symbol of the soul's longing for God; and the vivid realisation of the eternal sports of Kṛṣṇa in an imaginative Vṛndāvana is supposed by some Vaiṣṇava sects to lead to a passionate love and devotion for the deity. The *Bhāgavata*, and following it the *Padma* and the *Brahma-vaiṣvarta*, in their glorification of the Vṛndāvana-līlā of Kṛṣṇa, introduces a type of erotic mysticism as their leading religious-

motive. The apotheosis of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legends, with all its parapharnelia of impassioned beatific sports, becomes a literary gain of immense importance, and lifts the devotional literature from the dead level of speculative thought to the romantic richness of an intensely passionate experience. Thus, the new standpoint vivifies religion, as well as its poetry, with a human element, and transfigures one of the most powerful impulses of the human mind into a means of glorious exaltation. It thereby brings colour and beauty into religious life; and its essential truth lies in its assertion of the emotional and aesthetic in human nature against rigid austerity or the hard intellectuality of dogmas and doctrines.

But, in course of time, the new movement creates its own dogmas and doctrines. Along with its theology and philosophy, the sectarian devotionalism elaborates its appropriate system of emotional analysis, its refinements of psychology and poetics, its subtleties of phraseology, imagery and conceits. This is a natural corollary of the fact that the new movement flourished in an age of scholastic cultivation of learning. At no stage of its history, indeed, Sanskrit literature was a spontaneous product of poetic imagination; much culture and practice, and not inborn gift alone, went into its making; it was severely dominated by a self-conscious idea of art and method and was not generally meant for undisciplined enjoyment; its super-normal or super-individual character was recognised both by theory and practice, which ruled out personal emotion and emphasised purely artistic sentiment. All these tendencies become naturally exaggerated in a scholastic age, in which the really creative impulse in every sphere of knowledge or art was practically over. It was now a stage of critical elaboration, of fertile but fruitless erudition, of prolix but uncreative subtleties, and of amazing but wearisome acumen for trivial niceties. A concomitant cult of style was evolved, in which industry was reckoned higher than inspiration, a normative doctrine of technique replaced free exercise of the poetic imagination, a respect for literary convention ousted individuality of poetic treatment. No doubt, the Stotra springs from a more personal religious consciousness, but it could not entirely escape the inevitable stylistic elegancies and sentimental niceties which characterise the general literature of the age.

The technical analysis and authority of the older Poetics and Erotics had already evolved a system of meticulous classification of the ways, means and effects of the erotic sentiment; and established a series of rigid conventionalities to be expressed in stock poetic and emotional phrases, analogies and conceits. To all this the neo-Vaisnava theology and theory of sentiment added a further mass of well defined subtleties and elegancies. As the sentiment of Bhakti or religious devotion was approximated to the sentiment of literary relish, called *Rasa*, the whole apparatus of *Alamkāra*, as well as *Kāma-śāstra*, technicalities were ingeniously utilised and exalted, although the orthodox theory itself would never regard Bhakti as a *Rasa*. The result was the elaboration of a highly complicated mass of theological and psychological niceties, which were implicitly accepted as aesthetic and emotional conventions for application in literary productions. Nevertheless, it must also be admitted that the new application, in its erotic-religious subtilising of emotional details, became novel, intimate and inspiring; for the erotic sensibility in its devotional ecstasy very often rose above the mere formalism of rhetorical and psychological analysis, of metaphysical and theological convention. Very often, therefore, we find in this religious literature a rare and pleasing charm, a luscious exuberance of pictorial fancy and a mood of sensuous sentimentality, which we miss in the religious literature of earlier periods. It is true that the reality of personal feeling is sometimes lost in the repetition of conventional ideas and imageries, but the spring and resonance of melodious metres and the swing and smoothness of the comparatively facile diction, as well as the inherent passion and picturesqueness of the romantic content, frequently make the devotional poems and songs transcend the refined artificiality of stereotyped idea and expression. Even the subtle dogmas and formulas appear to have a charming effect on literary conception and phrasing, being often transmuted by its fervent attitude into fine things of art. The poems may not always have reached a high standard of absolute poetic excellence, but the standard which they often reach, in their rich and concrete expression of ecstatic elevation, is striking enough as a symptom of the presence of the poetic spirit, which the emotional Bhakti movement brought in its wake and which made its devotees passionately

and beautifully articulate.

But the passionately inclined devotional attitude was not without its defect and danger. The Purānic life of Kṛṣṇa being brought to the foreground, the ancient Epic figure of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was transformed beyond recognition. The old epic spirit of godly wisdom and manly devotion was replaced by a new spirit of mystical-emotional theology, which went into tender rapture over divine babyhood, into frankly sensuous ecstasy over the sportive loveliness of divine adolescence; and its god was moulded accordingly. The mediaeval expression of religious devotion dispenses with the necessity of intellectual conviction (Jñāna) or moral activity (Karma) in the orthodox sense, but takes its stand entirely upon a subtilised form of emotional realisation (Rasa). The Bengal theistic Vaiṣṇavism, for instance, conceives its personal god, Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana, as possessed of divinely human qualities, and fashions its man-like god in the light of human relationship. The Bhakti, in this system, is not an austere concentration of the mind on absolute reality, but the loving contemplation of a benign and blissful personal god, who is felt to be remote but whom the devotee desires to bring nearer to his feeling than to his understanding. It is also an experience capable of ascending scale of emotions. In theory and practice, it seeks to realise what is supposed to be the actual feeling of the deity, figured as a friend, son, father or master, but chiefly and essentially as a lover, in terms of such series of exceedingly familiar and authentic sentiments of a human being. All worship and salvation are regarded as nothing more than a blissful enjoyment of the purposeless divine sports in Vṛndāvana, involving personal consciousness and relation, direct or remote, between the enjoyer and the enjoyed. But the danger of such an attitude is also clear. As emphasis is laid chiefly on the erotic sentiment involved in the eternal Vṛndāvana sports of Kṛṣṇa, the attitude, however metaphysically interpreted, becomes too ardent, borders dangerously on sense-devotion and often lapses into a vivid and literal sensuousness.

Whatever may be the devotional value of this attitude, there can be no doubt that it became immensely fruitful in literature. It enlivened its Stotras and lifted them to a high level of passionate expression, imparting to them, as it did, as

much human as transcendental value. The devotee-poet speaks indeed of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, but under this thin veil he speaks of his own feelings, of his own hope and fear, of his own joys and sorrows. Though still theoretically vicarious, the erotic and other sentiments spring ultimately from the direct personal realisation of the poet. Regarded from this point of view, there is no sickly sentimentality or vague reflectiveness in these impassioned utterances; and what appeals most is not their theological subtleties, nor their rhetorical commonplaces, but their tenderness and human interest. However crude the erotic passages may appear to modern taste, it is impossible to underrate the honest human passion which is expressed in them with exquisite directness of speech.

The earliest sustained composition, which illustrates some of these tendencies, appear to be the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* of Līlāśuka, of which the text exists in two recensions. The Southern and Western manuscripts present the text in an expanded form in three Āśvāsas of more than a hundred stanzas in each; while, curiously enough, the Bengal tradition appears to have preserved this South Indian text more uniformly in one Āśvāsa only, namely, the first, with 112 stanzas. One of the concluding self-descriptive verses in the first Āśvāsa appears to make a punning, but reverential, mention of the poet's parents, Dāmodara and Nīvī, and of his preceptor Iśāna-deva; while the opening stanza speaks of Somagiri, apparently a Śaṅkarite ascetic, as his spiritual Guru. The poet calls himself Līlāśuka, without the addition of the name Bīlvamaṅgala, and does not give the fuller form Kṛṣṇalīlāśuka. The fact is important because of the possibility of existence of more than one Bīlvamaṅgala and of a Kṛṣṇalīlāśuka who is known chiefly as a grammarian; and we have nothing except the uncertain testimony of local anecdotes to equate the two names with that of our Līlāśuka. Beyond this nothing authentic is known of the date and personal history of our author, although many regions and monastic orders of Southern India claim him and have their local legends to support the claim; and reliance on this or that legend would enable one to assign him to different periods of time ranging from the ninth to the thirteenth century.

The *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* is a collection of devotional lyric stanzas in various metres, a Stotra-kāvya, in which Kṛṣṇa is the

object of the poet's prayer and praise. It is not a descriptive poem on the life or sports of Kṛṣṇa, but a passionate eulogy of the beloved deity, expressed in erotic words and imageries, in a mood of semi-amorous self-surrender. One need scarcely be reminded of the Vaiṣṇava dogma summarised in the following famous verse :

sa eṣa vāsudevo'sau sākṣat̄ puruṣa ucyate |  
strī-prāyam itarat̄ sarvaiḥ jagat̄ brahma-purahsaram ||

'He, this Vāsudeva, alone is spoken of directly as the male principle; the rest, the entire universe from Brahmā downwards, is related to him as the female principle'. It is, therefore, the sweet and beautiful form of the adolescent Kṛṣṇa of Vṛndāvana, the darling of the Gopīs, that is ardently adored by the poet as his Beloved :

kamaniya-kiṣora-mugdha-mūrteḥ  
kala-veṇu-kvanitādṛtānanendoh |  
mama vāci vijimbhatām̄ murārer  
madhurimṇah̄ kaṇikāpi kāpi kāpi ||

mada-śikhandi-śikhandā-vibhūṣanam̄  
madana-manthara-mugdha-mukhāmbujam |  
vraja-vadhū-nayanāñjana-rañjitarām̄  
vijayatām̄ mama vāñmaya-jīvitam ||

astoka-smita-bharam̄ āyatākṣam̄  
niḥśeṣa-stana-mṛditām̄ vrajāṅganābhilī |  
niḥśīma-stavakita-nīla-kānti-dhāram̄  
drṣyāsām̄ tri-bhuvana-sundaram̄ mahas te ||

If any analogy is permissible, one would think in this connexion of the mediaeval Christian lyrics, which are laden with passionate yearning for the youthful Christ as the beloved, and of which the Song of Solomon—'I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine'—is the sacred archetype; but the difference lies in conceiving the youthful Kṛṣṇa in a background of extremely sensuous charm, in the vivid exuberance of erotic fancy, and in the attitude of pathetic supplication and surrender (Prapatti) :

amūny adhanyāni dināntarāṇi hare tvad-ālokanam antareṇa |  
 anātha-bandho karuṇaika-sindho hā hanta  
 hā hanta katham nayāmi ||  
 nibaddha-mūrdhāñjalir eṣa yāce  
 nīrandhra-dainyonnati-mukta-kaṇṭham |  
 dayāmbudhe deva bhavat-kaṭākṣa-  
 dākṣiṇya-leśena sakṛṇ niṣiṇca ||

Although the poem is made up of detached stanzas, the ardent longing of our poet-devotee for a vision of his beautiful deity :

mama cetasi sphuratu vallavī-vibhor  
 maṇi-nūpura-praṇayi maṇju śiṇitam |  
 kamalā-vanēcara-kalinda-kanyakā-  
 kalahaṁsa-kaṇṭha-kala-kūjitādṛtam ||

taruṇāruṇa-karuṇāmaya-vipulāyata-nayanam  
 kamalā-kuca-kalasī-bhara-vipulikṛta-pulakam |  
 muralī-rava-taralikṛta-muni-mānasa-nalinam  
 mama khelatu mada-cetasi madhurādharam amṛtam ||

he deva he dayita he jagad-eka-bandho  
 he kṛṣṇa he capala he karuṇaika-sindho |  
 he nātha he ramaṇa he nayanābhīrāma  
 hā hā kadā nu bhavitāsi padam dṛṣor me ||

the wistfulness of his devotional hope and faith :

tat kaiśoram tac ca vaktrāravindam  
 tat kārunyam te ca līlā-kaṭākṣaḥ |  
 tat saundaryam sā ca manda-smita-śrīḥ  
 satyam satyam durlabham daivate'pi ||  
 mayi prasādām madhuraiḥ kaṭākṣair  
 varīṣī-nīnādānucarair vidhehi |  
 tvayi prasanne kim ihāparair nas  
 tvayi aprasanne kim ihāparir nah ||

and the evident burst of joy and amazement in the fulfilment of his cherished desire :

tad idam upanataṁ tamāla-nīlam  
 tarala-vilocana-tārakābhīrāmam |  
 mudita-mudita-vaktra-candra-bimbaṁ  
 mukharita-veṇu-vilāsi jīvitam me ||

citram̄ tad etad carapāravindam̄  
 citram̄ tad etad nayanāravindam̄ |  
 citram̄ tad etad vadanāravindam̄  
 citram̄ tad etad vapur asya ciṭram̄ ||  
 madhuram̄ madhuram̄ vapur asya vibhor  
 madhuram̄ madhuram̄ vadanaṁ madhuram̄ |  
 madhu-gandhi mṛdu-smitam̄ etad aho  
 madhuram̄ madhuram̄ madhuram̄ ||

—all this supplies an inner unity which weaves the detached stanzas into a passionate whole. It will be seen that in the stanzas that we have quoted at random we have the flow and resonance of a variety of short lyrical measures like Aupacchandasika, Drutavilambita, Praharṣiṇī, Indravajrā, Upajāti, Mañjubhāsiṇī, Lalitagati, Vasantatilaka, Śālinī, Puṣpitāgrā and Toṣaka, the rhythm of which certainly adds to the charm of expression ; and this employment of various musical metres became a feature of many of the later emotional Stotra-kāvyas. It will be seen also that inspite of emotional directness, the poem possesses all the distinctive features of a deliberate work of art. This result has been possible because here we have not so much the systematic expression of religious ideas as their automatic emotional fusion into a whole in a remarkable poetical and devotional personality, which makes these spiritual effusions intensely attractive. The sheer beauty and music of words and the highly pictorial effect, authenticated by a deep sincerity of ecstatic passion, make this work a finished product of lyric imagination. It is, therefore, not only a noteworthy poetical composition of undoubted charm, but also an important document of mediaeval Bhakti-devoutness, which illustrates finely the use of erotic motif in the service of religion, and deservedly holds a high place in its Stotra-literature.

Several other collections of similar stanzas, called *Sumanigala-stotra*, *Bilvamāngala-stotra*, *Kṛṣṇa-stotra*, *Bāla-gopāla-stuti* and so forth are also attributed to the author of *Kṛṣṇa-kāṇḍa-myāta*. They contain some undoubtedly fine verses of a similar type, but the authenticity of such collectanea is extremely doubtful. Leaving aside such and other apocryphal or stray poems, we pass on to the *Gīta-govīḍa* of Jayadeva. It is not really a Stotra or Stotra-kāvya ; but, equally famous and popular, it is

comparable to Līlāśuka's work in many respects ; and representing, as it does, another aspect of the same devotional and poetical tendency, it becomes with it the rich source of literary and religious inspiration of mediaeval India. The fame of Jayadeva's work has never been confined within the limits of Bengal ; it has claimed more than forty commentators from different provinces of India, and more than a dozen imitations ; it is cited extensively in Anthologies ; it is regarded not only as a great poem but also as a great religious work of mediaeval Vaiṣṇava Bhakti. Of the author himself, however, our information is scanty, although we have a large number of legends which are matters of pious belief rather than positive historical facts. In a verse occurring in the work itself (xii. 11), we are informed that he was the son of Bhojadeva and Rāmādevī (v. *l.* Rādhā<sup>9</sup> or Vāmā<sup>10</sup>), and the name of his wife was probably Padmāvatī alluded to in other verses. His home was Kendubilva (iii. 10), which has been identified with Kenduli, a village on the bank of the river Ajaya in the district of Birbhum in Bengal, where an annual fair is still held in his honour on the last day of Māgha. He flourished in the 12th century at the time of Lakṣmana-sena of Bengal, with whose court he is associated.

Although the *Gīta-govinda* contains two fine opening Stotras (the Daśāvatāra and the *Jaya jaya deva hare* Stotras) the work itself is not a regular Stotra or a Stotra-kāvya. But it is often regarded as a great religious work, even though its literary appeal is no less great. It consists really of a highly finished series of lyrics and songs on the erotic episode of Kṛṣṇa's vernal sports in Vṛndāvana. It is divided into twelve cantos in the form, but not in the spirit, of the orthodox Kāvya. Each canto falls into sections which contain Padāvalīs or songs, composed in rhymed moric metres and set to different tunes. These songs, which are briefly introduced or followed by a stanza or two written in the orthodox classical metres, form indeed the staple of the work. They are placed as musical speeches in the mouth of three interlocutors, namely, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā and her companion, not in the form of regular dialogues but as lyric expressions of particular emotional predicament, individually uttered or described by them in the musical mode. The theme, which is developed in this novel operatic form, is simple. It describes the temporary estrangement of Rādhā

from Kṛṣṇa who is sporting with other Gopīs, Rādhā's sorrow, longing and jealousy, intercession of Rādhā's companion, Kṛṣṇa's return, penitence and propitiation of Rādhā, and the joy of their final reunion.

It will be seen that the theme has nothing new in it, and in working it out all the conventions and common-places of Sanskrit love-poetry are skilfully utilised; but the literary form in which the theme is presented is extremely original. The work calls itself a Kāvya and conforms to the formal division into cantos, but in reality it goes much beyond the stereotyped Kāvya prescribed by the rhetoricians and practised by the poets. Modern critics have found in it a lyric drama (Lassen), a pastoral (Jones), an opera (Lévi), a melodrama (Fischel) and a refined Yātrā (Von Schroeder). It is obvious that none of these descriptions is adequate. As a matter of fact, like all creative works of art, it has a form of its own, and therefore defies all conventional classification. Though cast in a semi-dramatic mould, the spirit is entirely lyrical; though modelled perhaps on the prototype of popular Kṛṣṇa-yātrā in its musical and melodramatic peculiarities, it is yet far removed from the old Yātrā by its highly stylised mode of expression; though imbued with religious feeling, the attitude is not entirely divorced from the secular; though it depicts divine love, this love is considerably humanised in an atmosphere of passionate poetic appeal; though intended and still used for popular festival where simplicity and directness count, it yet possesses all the distinctive characteristics of a deliberate work of art. The chief interest of the work lies in its Padāvalīs. They are meant to be sung as speeches, being skilfully composed as word-pictures in rhymed, alliterative and musical moric metres; and the use of refrain not only intensifies their haunting melody, but also combines the detached stanzas into a perfect whole. We have thus narration, description and speech finely interwoven with recitation and song, a combination which creates a type unknown in Sanskrit. The emotional infatus is picturesquely supplied, in a novel yet familiar form, by the underlying erotic mysticism, which expresses the ecstatic devotional sentiment in the intimate language and imagery of earthly passion. All this is not only harmoniously blended with the surrounding beauty of nature, but is also enveloped in

a fine excess of pictorial richness, verbal harmony and lyrical splendour, of which it is difficult to find a parallel. Jayadeva makes a wonderful use of the sheer beauty of words of which Sanskrit is so capable ; and like all artistic masterpieces his work becomes almost untranslatable. No doubt, there is in all this deliberate workmanship, but all effort is successfully concealed in an effective simplicity and clarity in a series of extremely passionate and musical word-pictures.

In novelty and completeness of effect, therefore, the *Gita-govinda* is a unique work in Sanskrit both in its emotional and literary aspects, and it can be regarded as almost creating a new *genre*. Jayadeva, it is true, emphasises the praise and worship of Kṛṣṇa, but his work is not, at least in its form and spirit, the expression of an intensely devotional personality in the sense in which Līlāśuka's poem is. Kṛṣṇa is his theme, the fascinating Vilāsa-kalā of the Vṛndāvana-līlā forms its absorbing interest :

yadi hari-smaraṇe sarasaiḥ mano  
yadi vilāsa-kalāśū kutūhalam |  
madhura-komala-kānta-padāvalīṁ  
śṛṇu tadā jayadeva-sarasvatīm ||

If Jayadeva claims religious merit, he also prides himself upon the elegance, softness and music of his words, as well as upon the felicity and richness of his sentiments. The claim is by no means extravagant. He is chiefly and essentially a poet as Līlāśuka is chiefly and essentially a devotee. Three centuries later the Caitanya sect of Bengal attempted to interpret the *Gita-govinda* not so much as a poetical composition of great beauty but as a devotional text, illustrating the refined subtleties of its theology and Rasa-śāstra. But it is difficult to believe that the Kṛṣṇaism, which emerges in a finished literary form in this poem, should be equated with the sectarian dogmas and doctrines of later scholastic theologians. As a poet, as well as a devotee, of undoubted gifts, Jayadeva could not have made it his concern to compose a religious treatise, as perhaps Līlāśuka also never did, according to any particular Vaiṣṇava dogmatics ; he claims merit as a poet, and his religious emotion or inspiration should not be allowed to obscure his proper claim.

In the verse quoted above Jayadeva himself indicates that the musical *Padāvalīs* form the vital element of his poem, and rightly characterises them as *madhura*, *komala* and *kānta*. But just as his work itself does not strictly follow the tradition of the Sanskrit Kavya, his *Padāvalīs* also do not strictly follow the form and spirit of traditional Sanskrit verse. The rhymed and melodious moric metres with their refrain are hardly akin to older Sanskrit metres, while the last line gives what is called the *Bhanītā*—a method not found in earlier Sanskrit poetry of giving us the name of the poet. As the work is well known, it is not necessary to give extensive quotations to illustrate our point; but take, for instance, the following short *Padāvalī*, describing Rādhā's recollection of Kṛṣṇa's erotic sports during the *Rāsa-līlā*:

sañcara-d-adhara-sudhā-madhura-dhvani-  
mukharita-mohana-vaniśam |  
calita-dṛgañcal-añcal-añauli-kapola-vilola-vatamśam ||  
rāsc harim iha vihita-vilāsam |  
smarati mano mama kṛta-parihāsam || (Dhruva)  
candraka-cāru-mayūra-śikhanda-mañḍala-valayita-keśam |  
pracura-purandara-dhanur-anurañjita-medura-mudira-suvesam ||  
gopa-kadamba-nitambavatī-mukha-cumbana-lambhita-lobham |  
bandhujīva-madhurādhara-pallavam ullasita-smita-śobham ||  
jalada-pañala-valad-indu-vinindita-candana-tilaka-lalāṭam |  
piṇa-payodhara-parisara-mardana-nirdaya-hṛdaya-kapāṭam ||  
śrī-jayadeva-bhanītam ati-sundara-mohana-madhuripu-rūpam ||  
hari-caruṇa-smaranaṁ prati sañprati puṇyavatām anurūpam ||

It will be seen that the diction of the *Padāvalī* accepts the literary convention of Sanskrit in its profuse employment of verbal figures like alliteration and chiming, in its highly ornamentalistic mode of expression; but at the same time it reflects the spirit and manner of vernacular songs. The very term *Padāvalī* itself, which becomes so familiar in later Bengali songs, is not found in this sense in Sanskrit, but is obviously taken from popular poetry. The diction is indeed highly cultivated, but the appeal is direct and popular. The presumption is not unlikely, therefore, that the vernacular literature in this case must have reacted upon the Sanskrit; and the *Gītagovinda* is probably one of the earliest examples of an attempt

to renew and remodel older forms of Sanskrit composition by absorbing the newer characteristics of the coming literature in the vernacular. The novelty of Jayadeva's attempt became so attractive that the *Padāvalī* came to be established as an interesting feature not only in Bengali Vaisnava songs but also in later devotional Vaisnava literature in Sanskrit.

This is seen not only in about a dozen imitations which the *Gīta-govinda*, like the *Meghadūta*, produced, but also, independently, in some works which introduce Padāvalis composed on the model of those of Jayadeva. Thus, we have inferior imitative works like the *Gīta-gourīpali* of Bhānudatta, *Gītarāghava* of Prabhākara and of Hari-saṅkara, *Gīta-digambara* of Vāṁśamaṇi, which substitute the theme of Hara and Gaurī or Rāma and Sītā for that of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā; but it is not necessary to consider them here, for these literary counterfeits produced in an unoriginal epoch never became the current coins of poetry. But how close the imitation is will be clear if we compare, for instance, the following passage from the *Gīta-gourīpali*:

abhinava-yauvana-bhūṣitayā dara-taralita-locaṇa-tāram |  
kimcid-udañcita-vihasitayā calad-avirala-pulaka-vikāram |

sakhi he śāṅkaram udita-vilāsam |  
saha saṅgamaya mayā natayā rati-kautuka-daraśita-hāsam ||  
(Dhruva)

with the corresponding passage from the *Gīta-govinda*:

nibhṛta-nikuñja-grham gatayā niśi rahasi niliya vasantam  
cakita-vilokita-sakala-disā rati-rabhasa-rasena hasantam ||

sakhi he keśi-mathanam udāram |  
ramaya mayā saha madana-manoratha-bhāvitayā sa-vikāra-  
(Dhru)

But apart from these works which are openly imitative, the *Śringāra-rasa-mandana* of Viṭṭhaleśvara, son of Vallabhācārya, the founder of the Vallabhācāri sect, introduces several songs of the same type: such as

smita-ruci-ruciratarānana-kamalam udīkṣya  
 hare rati-kandam |  
 cumbati kāpi nitambavatī karatala-dhṛta-cibukam  
 amandam || etc.

This is done, much better, also by Rāmānanda-rāya, who flourished under Gajapati Pratāparudra of Orissa, in his drama *Jagannātha-vallabha*; e.g.

mṛdutara-māruta-vellita-pallava-vallī-valita-śikhaṇḍam |  
 tilaka-viḍambita-mārakata-maṇi-tala-bimbita-  
 śāśadhara-khaṇḍam ||  
 yuvati-manohara-veśam |  
 kalaya kalānidhim iva dharanīm anu  
 pariṇata-rūpa-viśeṣam || (Dhruva)  
 khelā-dolāyita-maṇi-kunḍala-ruci-rucirānana-sobham |  
 helā-taralita-madhura-vilocana-janita-vadhū-jana-lobhām ||  
 gajapati-rudra-narādhīpa-cetasi janayatū mudam anuvāram |  
 rāmānanda-rāya kavi-bhaṇitam madhuripu-rūpam udāram ||

Such songs occur also in the poetical works of some of the followers of Caitanya of Bengal, e.g. in Kavikarṇapūra's *Ānanda-vyndāvana* Campū, in Jīva Gosvāmin's *Gopāla-campū*, in Prabodhānanda's *Sāṅgīta-mādhava* and in Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Citāvalī*. Of these the most successful reproduction of the spirit and style of Jayadeva is to be found in the Padāvalīs of Rūpa Gosvāmin, who had an undoubted talent for facility of phrase and modulation of sound and syllable, as will appear from the following short specimen :

taruṇī-locana-tāpa-vimocana-hāsa-sudhānkura-dhārī |  
 manda-maruc-cala-piñcha-kṛtojjvala-maulir udāra-vihārī ||  
 sundari paśya milati vanamālī |  
 divase pariṇatim upagacchati sati nava-nava-vibhrama-śālī ||  
 (Dhruva)  
 dhenu-khuroddhata-reṇu-paripluta-phulla-saroruha-dāmā |  
 acira-vikasvara-lasad-indīvara-māṇḍala-sundara-dhāmā ||  
 kala-muralī-ruti-kṛta-tāvaka-ratir atra dṛganta-taraṅgī |  
 cāru-sanātana-tanur-anurañjana-kāri-suhṛd-gaṇa-saṅgī ||

Of later devotional works of the erotic-mystic type it is not necessary for us to dwell at length; for with Jayadeva we are

practically at the end of what is best, not only in this kind of poetry, but also in Sanskrit poetry in general, and its later annals are mostly dull and uninspiring. Jayadeva blew the embers of poetry with a new breath, but the momentary glow did not arrest its steady decline. We can take as an instance the *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-taraṅgiṇī* of Nārāyaṇa-tīrtha, pupil of Śivarāmā-nanda-tīrtha, who is said to have flourished in the Godāvarī-district about 1700 A.D. This ambitious work comprehends in twelve *Taraṅgas* the entire story of Kṛṣṇa from birth to establishment at Dvārakā, and includes songs in the musical mode. It is sometimes ranked with the poems of Līlāsuka and Jayadeva as the third great work on Kṛṣṇa-līlā; but it is really a late and laboured imitation which never attained more than a limited currency, and its importance need not be unduly exaggerated.

The same remarks apply, more or less, to the emotional Bhakti-productions of later times, in which Bengal became prolific in the early years of the Caitanya movement. We have already mentioned some of these devotional works, to which may be added the three dramas, namely, the *Vidagdha-mādhava*, *Lalita-mādhava* and *Dānakeli-kaumudi* of Rūpa Gosvāmin, the half-allegorical drama *Caitanya-candrodaya* and the poem *Kṛṣṇāhnikā-kaumudi* of Paramānanda-dāsa Kavikarṇapūra, the poem *Dāna-keli-cintā-mayī* and the Campū *Muktā-caritra* of Raghunātha-dāsa, the extensive and elaborate poem *Govinda-līlāmṛta* of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the much later poems *Camat-kāra-candrikā*, *Gaurāṅga-līlāmṛta* and *Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta* of Viśvanātha Cakravartin. They are composed in the ornate manner of the later Kāvya and exhibit all its merits and defects. Although marked by considerable literary gift, they have more doctrinal than poetic value, and it is not necessary to consider them here.

But mention must be made of some fine Stotras which the movement produced. The only composition that has been left of Caitanya himself consists of eight stanzas, called *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, which are given in Rūpa Gosvāmin's *Padyāvalī*, one of the finest and most extensive anthologies of Kṛṣṇaite verses. These eight Stotra-stanzas composed in different metres, give passionate expression to Caitanya's vivid and simple faith, as the following stanzas composed in Viyoginī metre will illustrate :

na dhanam na janam na sundaram  
 kavitaṁ vā jagadiśa kāmaye |  
 mama janmani janmanīśvare  
 bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi ||

ayi nanda-tanūja kiṁkaraṁ patitam viśame bhavāmbudhau |  
 kṛpayā tava pāda-pañkaja-sthita-dhūli-saḍśam vicintaya ||

nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā  
 vadanaṁ gadgada-ruddhayā girā |  
 pulakair nicitam vapuh kadā  
 tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati ||

But the most typical examples of Bengal Vaiṣṇava Stotra are furnished respectively by the *Stavāvalī* of Raghunātha-dāsa and the *Stava-mālā* of Rūpa Gosvāmin. Both of them were immediate disciples of Caitanya, and wrote in Sanskrit ; and as authoritative teachers of the new faith, as well as poets, rhetoricians, learned theologians and devotees, they deservedly became the centre of its arduous and prolonged literary activity at Vṛndāvana. A full account of all these writings will be found in the author's work on Bengal Vaiṣṇavism ; but since most of them are printed in Bengali characters and are not as widely known as they deserve, perhaps a brief appreciation will not be out of place here.

The *Stavāvalī* of Raghunātha-dāsa, which contains twenty-nine Stotras of varying lengths, diverse metres and unequal merit, is inspired by the frankly sensuous Vṛndāvana sports to an intensely passionate expression. They, however, illustrate certain aspect of the devotional attitude, namely, the realisation of what is called the Rāgānugā form of Bhakti, in which, as in this case, the poet imagines himself to be, not a Sakhī or companion, but a Dāsī or humble hand-maid of Rādhā, and fervently prays for a vision and vicarious enjoyment of the erotic sports of his adored deity. This form of ecstatic worship and adoration of Rādhā (Rādhā-bhajana) is the predominating motive of almost all his Stotras, for he declares :

bhajāmi rādhāṁ aravinda-netrāṁ  
 smarāmi rādhāṁ madhura-smitāsyām |  
 vadāmi rādhāṁ karuṇā-bharādrām  
 tato mamānyāsti gatir na kāpi ||

The mode of worship that he prefers is, on his own confession, not Sakhya but Dāsyā :

pādābjayos tava vinā vara-dāsyam eva  
 nānyat kadāpi samaye kila devi yāce |  
 sakhyāya te mama namo'stu namo'stu nityam  
 dāsyāya te mama raso'stu raso'stu satyam ||

Hence, in his much praised Stotra, the *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, from which this verse is taken, his sorrow of separation from Rādhā and his intense longing for service and worship are expressed with great warmth and earnestness, the author conceiving himself as a hand-maid of Rādhā, and describing in lavish detail how he would like to wait upon her, help her to dress and decorate her limbs, and minister unto her love-affair. The prayers in almost all the Stotras are directly addressed to Rādhā more than to Kṛṣṇa; for, in the poet's view, it is impossible to attain Kṛṣṇa without an adoration of Rādhā :

auārādhya rādhā-padāmbhoja-reṇum  
 anāśritya vṛṇdāvānīn tat-padāñkam |  
 asaṁbhāṣya tad-bhāva-gambhīra-cittān  
 kutaḥ syāma-sindho rasasyāvagāhah ||

In spite of an excess of sensuous sentimentality, which however, is an essence of the faith, the devout yet passionate personal note in these Stotras of Raghunātha-dāsa is certainly appropriate to this subjective type of devotional literature. It is not mere abstract contemplation, dogmatic exposition or artistic expression of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa legend which interests him; he desires a rich and intimate realisation of all its romantic associations. And he has been able to communicate to his Stotras the rich and intimate picturesqueness of his devotional fancy and exuberant sentiment. The purely poetic merit of these passionate effusions is perhaps not very high; but if they are less artistic, they are more human in their appeal, being comparatively free from mere dogma and rhetoric in their emotional exaltation and warmth of earnest belief.

The Stotras, Gītas and Birudas of his friend and fellow-disciple, Rūpa Gosvāmin, are of somewhat different type. As they are deliberately meant to illustrate the many nuances of the erotico-emotional worship of Kṛṣṇa made current by the

Caitanya movement, they have more learning than inspiration, more rhetoric than reality, more wealth of words than fervour of faith, more artistic than human appeal. They are collected together by his nephew Jīva Gosvāmin in a volume entitled *Stava-mālā*, which contains some sixty separate Stotras, Gītas and Birudas, concerned with the various details, chiefly erotic, of the *Vṛndāvana-līlā* of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. The pieces are of unequal merit, but they are composed in an endless variety of musical metres with an astonishing volume of vocabulary and richness of decorative devices, for which the author appears to possess an irrepressible talent. Rūpa is certainly a poet who is also a devotee, but he is also a vastly learned scholar and trained verbal specialist, attempting many rare and some self-invented metres, as well as daring dexterity of words and rhythmical forms.

Some of the Stotras, like the *Mukunda-muktāvalī*, betray the influence of Līlāśuka in respect of its fine pictorial fancy and skilful adjustment of sound-effect. It contains thirty rhymed or alliterative stanzas, eight being composed in the moric *Pajjhaṭikā* of sixteen mātrās, four in Mālinī and two in each of the following short lyrical measures, namely, Cīṭrā, Jaladharamālā, Raṅgiṇī, Tūṇaka, Bhujangaprayāta, Sravīṇī, Jaloddhatagati, Śālinī and Tvaritagati. As the work is in some respects typical of Rūpa Gosvāmin's manner, it deserves extensive quotation, but we can select here only one stanza in the common Mālinī metre made uncommon by effective middle rhyme (so familiar in vernacular verse), which adds to its melodiousness :

nava-jaladhara-varṇam campakodbhāsi-karṇam  
vikasita-nalināsyam visphuran-manda-hāsyam |  
kanaka-ruci-dukūlam cāru-barhāvacūlam  
kam api nikhila-sāram naumi gopī-kumāram ||

Similar attempt at verbal and metrical melody, with jingle of rhyme and repetition of refrain, are made in his *Uthālikā-vallari* and *Śvayam-utpreksita-līlā*, as well as in some of his Aṣṭakas like the *Kuñja-vihāryaṣṭaka*; but more interesting is his attempt to evolve various rhythmic verse and prose forms in his *Aṣṭādaśa-chandas* and *Govinda-birudāvalī*. The *Aṣṭādaśa-chandas* is more diversified in content, inasmuch as it proposes,

in the successive eighteen pieces, to deal with some of the episodes of Vṛṇḍāvana-līlā from birth to the slaying of Karṣa. The stretches of the stanzas, with their non-stop lines ranging from eight to sixty, are too lengthy for full quotation, but we quote here a few lines only from some of them to illustrate the variety of verbal melody which they often attain :

Gucchaka Chandas (11 lines) :

nija-mahima-maṇḍalī-vraja-vasati-rocanam |  
vadana-vidhu-mādhurī-ramita-pitr-locanam |  
śruti-nipuna-bhūṣura-vraja-vihita-jātakam |  
tanu-jalada-tarpita-svajana-gaṇa-cātakam | etc.

Anukūla Chandas (12 lines) :

dhṛta-dadhi-manthana-danḍa janaṇī-cumbita-gaṇḍa |  
pīta-savitrī-dugdha kala-bhāṣita-kula-mugdha | etc.

Dvipadikā Chandas (28 lines) :

pīnojjvala-bhuja-danḍah śīrasi sphurita-śikhaṇḍah |  
śaśi-khaṇḍābha-lalāṭah pīvara-hṛdaya-kavāṭah || etc.

Hāri-hariṇa Chandas (15 lines) :

megha-samaya-pūrti-ramita vṛṣṭiṣu taru-kandara-cita ||  
nīpa-kakubha-puṣpa-valita-sāndra-vipina-labdha-lalita ||  
bhakta-pariṣad-iṣṭa-varada hāri-vibhava-dhāri-śarada-  
laṅkṛta-bahu-pakṣi-bharita-kāñana-kṛta-divya-carita || etc.

Lalita-bhṛṅga Chandas (58 lines) :

śārada-vidhu-vīkṣaṇa-madhu-vardhita-mada-pūra |  
iṣṭa-bhajana-vallabha-jana-citta-kamala-sūra ||  
gopa-yuyati-maṇḍala-mati-mohana-kala-gīta ||  
mukta-sakala-kṛtya-vikala-yauvata-parivīta || etc.

The *Govinda-birudāvalī*, though much praised, is a similar but less attractive composition both in its form and content; for its object is to string together a series of Birudas or epithets of Kṛṣṇa in a vast variety of rhythmic prose by means of ingenious but wearisome verbal devices of alliteration, rhyming and similar tricks melodious repetition of syllables. It has more artifice than art. The extraordinary jingle of sounds is, no doubt, pleasing, but the result is nothing more than astonishing feats of clever verbosity. A few examples will suffice:

kānanārabdha-kākali-śabda-pāṭavākṛṣṭa-gopikā-dṛṣṭa |  
 cāturi-juṣṭa-rādhikā-tuṣṭa kāmninī-lakṣa-mohane dakṣa |  
 bhāminī-pakṣa mām amuñi rakṣa ||

We have also a succession of light syllables :

kuṣuma-nikara-nicita-cikura nakhara-vijita-manija-mukura |  
 subhaṭa-paṭīma-ramita-maṭhura vikaṭa-samara-naṭana-catura |  
 samada-bhujaga-damana-carapa nikhila-  
 paṭupa-nicaya-śaraṇa | etc.

Or, a row of phrases arranged according to the order of the letters of the alphabet :

acyuta jaya jaya ārta-kṛpāmaya |  
 indra-makhārdana īti-viśātana |  
 ujjvala-vibhrma ūrjita-vikrama | etc.

Or, a string of repetition of similar syllables :

vraja-pr̥thu-pallī-parisara-vallī- |  
 vana-bhuvi tallī-gaṇa-bhṛti mallī- |  
 manasija-bhallañjita-śiva-mallī-  
 kumuda-matallī-yuṣi gata jhillī-  
 pariṣadi hallīsaka-sukha-jhallī-  
 rata pariphullīkṛta-cala-cillī-  
 jita-rati-mallī-mada-bhara, etc.

Rūpa Gosvāmin surprises us indeed by such ingenious and interminable accumulation of descriptive epithets, but they cease to be descriptive by being more rhetorically brilliant than visually illuminating.

The amazing literary prodigality of Rūpa in weaving endless patterns of rhythmic richness is better exemplified in his *Gītāvalī*. It consists of forty-one songs, set to musical tunes and composed in moric metres, after the Padāvalīs of Jayadeva. The songs deal with four picturesque topics connected with the Vṛndāvana-līlā, namely, birth of Kṛṣṇa, Vasanta-pañcamī, Dola and Rāsa, as well as give incidental musical word-pictures of Rādhā as the conventional eight types of heroine, namely, Abhisārikā etc. Rūpa always keeps in view his particular object of illustrating his Rasa-śāstra, but the scholar here does not altogether overshadow the poet. We have already

given one specimen, but we are tempted to quote another on Rāsa-lilā to give an idea of the type of songs affected :

komala-śaśikara-rāmya-vanāntara-nirmita-gīta-vilāsa ||  
 tūrṇa-samāgata-vallava-yauvata-vikṣāna-kṛta-parihāsa ||  
 jaya jaya bhānuṣutā-taṭa-rāṅga-mahānaṭa  
 sundara nanda-kumāra | (Dhruva)  
 śarad-āṅgikṛta-divya-rasāvṛta-māngala-rāsa-vihāra |  
 gopī-cumbita rāga-karambita māna-vilokana-līna |  
 guna-garvonnata rādhā-samāgata sauhṛda-sāmpad-adhina ||  
 tad-vacanāmr̥ta-pāna-madāhṛta valayikṛta-parivāra |  
 sura-taruṇī-gaṇa-mati-vikṣobhana khelana-valgita-hāra ||  
 ambu-vigāhana-nandita-nija-jana maṇdita-yumunā-tīra |  
 sukha-samīvid-ghana pūrṇa sanātana nirmala-nīla-śarīra ||

There can be little doubt that this is a fine imitation of the spirit and style of Jayadeva's exquisite songs. In spite of the fact that the songs of the *Gītāvalī* are mostly imitative, their variety and pleasing quality, if not anything else, should not be denied.

It would seem that we have devoted disproportionately long space to the consideration of the Bengal Vaiṣṇava Stotras and songs, especially to those of Rūpa Gosvāmin. But since mediaeval devotionalism with its picturesque and erotic emotionalism reaches its climax in these somewhat neglected compositions, our object has been to draw attention to them. The Stotras and Gītas of Rūpa, if not his Birudas, are typical in this respect, especially in view of the highly sensuous pictorial fancy and inexhaustible lyrical and musical gift of the author. But it must also be admitted that profuse and overwrought rhetoric often obscures the reality of the emotion and gives it an appearance of spectacular sensibility, while the incessant straining after purely verbal and metrical effect does not always give us convincing visual pictures. No doubt, Rūpa's efforts bear witness alike to his literary skill, learning and devotion, but we often miss in them the true accent of poetry, as well as the devotional fervour and touching quality of self-expression, the flavour of a simple and loveable personality, which is so conspicuous, for instance, in the less artistic effusions of his friend Raghunātha-dāsa.

## ON THE DATE OF THE SUBHĀṢITĀVALI

Peterson, in his edition of the *Subhāṣitāvali*,<sup>1</sup> wrote in 1886<sup>2</sup>: "Of the complier [of the anthology] all we can say is that he cannot have flourished before Jainollābhadrīna [i.e. Zain ul-Ābidīn], whose date is given by Cunningham as A.D. 1417-67." Aufrecht places Vallabhadeva, the compiler of this important Sanskrit anthology, in the sixteenth century A.D., on the ground that Vallabhadeva has laid the *Śāṅgadīkṛta-paddhati* under contribution in compiling his anthology.<sup>3</sup> With this view Winternitz seems to agree.<sup>4</sup>

The reference to Vallabhadeva and his *Subhāṣitāvali*, however, by Vandyaghaṭīya Sarvānanda in his *Tīkāsarvasva* on the lexicon of Amara<sup>5</sup> appears to conflict with the date conjectured by Peterson and Aufrecht. Commenting on the alternative forms *javā* and *japā*, Sarvānanda points out<sup>6</sup> that a pun based on the possibility of these two forms is to be found in a verse in the *Subhāṣitāvali* of the Kāśmīra-Vallabhadeva: *hāśmīra-vallabhadeva-racita-subhāṣitāvalyām api pakārā-śleṣah, tathā ca madanam avalokya niṣphalam anityatām api [ca] bandhu-jīvānām ||*

*vanam upagamya bhramarāḥ samprati jāto japa-saktah |*

This verse actually occurs anonymously as no. 726 of the *Subhāṣitāvali*,<sup>7</sup> and there can be hardly any doubt as to the correctness of the attribution. It is clear, therefore, that this anthology was known to Sarvānanda, and his date should give us the lower terminus to its date. Sarvānanda himself gives us a clue as to the time when his commentary was actually composed. Commenting on the passage *daive yuga-sahasre dvē*

<sup>1</sup> Introduction, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Catalogus Catalogorum, i. p. 555a. This date is not justifiable in itself, as the *Śāṅgadīkṛta-paddhati* was compiled about A.D. 1363.

<sup>3</sup> Geschichte der ind. Lit. iii, p. 158.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Trivandrum Sansk. Ser. 1914-17.

<sup>5</sup> Pt. ii, kāṇḍa ii, varga 4, p. 130.

<sup>6</sup> The reading slightly varies. In the second *pāda* there is, before *bandhu*<sup>8</sup>, *ca*, which is required by the metre (as restored by us). In the third *pāda*, instead of *vanam*, the reading in the anthology is *gurum*.

brāhmaṇī<sup>1</sup> he states : *idānīm caikāṣṭi-varṣādhika-sahasraiha-paryantena Śakābda-kālena ṣaṭi-varṣādhika-dvīcatvārīṁśacchātāni kali-sandhyāyā bhūtāni*. In other words, the Śaka-year 1081 and the Kali-year 4260 had passed away at the moment he was writing.<sup>2</sup> This would give us A.D. 1160 as the date of Sarvānanda's commentary.<sup>3</sup> Vallabhadeva's anthology, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> *Kāla-varga*, sl. 21 (Pt. i, kāṇḍa i, varga 4, pp. 90-1).

<sup>2</sup> In the copy of Sarvānanda's commentary noticed by Seshagiri Sastri (*Report*, 1893-4, No. 2, p. 26) this reference to *Kāśīmīra-Vallabhadeva-racita-Subhāṣitārāli* also occurs ; but relying on Peterson's date, Seshagiri Sastri places Sarvānanda between A.D. 1417 and 1431 the last date being obtained by the latter's priority to Rāyamukūṭa (p. 24). But the learned Sastri appears to have overlooked this passage bearing on the date of the commentary. The other Vallabha cited by Sarvānanda (Pt. ii. pp. 23, 350) is obviously the well-known scholiast Vallabha, who belonged to the first half of the tenth century and wrote commentaries on the standard Mahākāvya-s ; for Sarvānanda's citations contain a reference to his commentaries on *Sīmhpūla*<sup>4</sup> and *Kumāra*<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> No fact has yet come to light which would make us doubt or dispute the authenticity of this date given by Sarvānanda himself. He appears to quote no author who is known to be of a later date than the middle of the twelfth century. This date may be corroborated by another fact. Sarvānanda calls himself *vandyaghaṭīṛtihara-putra*. The word *vandyaghaṭī* is well known in Bengal as connected with the name of the village from which Vandy or Vandyaghaṭīya Brahmanas take their name. We need not take the explanation of Haraprasad Sastri (appended in a note to Seshagiri's *Report* cited above) that it denotes a person who has married a girl of superior status ; for it is probably here a proper name, Sarvānanda describing himself as the son of one Ṛtihara. The name actually occurs in the form of Atihara or Atihara in the genealogical table of Vandyaghaṭī Brahmanas given in Hari Miśra's *Kāśīkī* (quoted in Nagendranath Vasu's *Vākya Jāṭīya Itihāsa*, p. 138). It must also be noted that Ṛtihara's brother's son Vāmana received (according to these *Kula-pañjikās*) *kula-maryādā* from Ballālasena (op. cit., p. 142, f.n.), one of whose known dates is A.D. 1160. This date coincides happily with that given by Sarvānanda. It is to be noted, however, that the name of Ṛtihara's son is not recorded in these genealogical accounts. This is somewhat puzzling ; but possibly it may be explained by the not unlikely supposition that as Sarvānanda left Bengal for the distant South (where alone his work has been preserved, and not in Bengal), no account either of him or his family was known or kept in the genealogical books compiled in Bengal for purposes of social reference. Nagendranath Vasu, however, makes a mistake (op. cit., p. 198, f.n.) when he identifies our author with a much later and better known Sarvānanda, whose father's name is given as Digambara.

must be presumed to have been either contemporaneous with or composed before this date.

Let us now see if there is anything in the date furnished by the *Subhāṣitāvali* itself which would conflict with this conclusion. Of a large number of authors cited in this anthology, we possess no authentic information; but those about whom our knowledge is more definite can be grouped into three classes; (1) Those who flourished before the date proposed by us, i.e., before, say, A.D. 1150; (2) those who were contemporaneous with this date; and (3) those who may be supposed to have lived after this date. We need not consider the first of these groups. Of the second group, i.e., of those authors who are known or conjectured to have lived about the middle of the twelfth century, the names of Jayadeva, Mañkha, Śriharṣa, Kalhaṇa, Hemācārya, Jenduka, and Kalyāṇadatta are notable. The four verses of Jayadeva in this anthology are taken from his *Gīta-govinda*; of the thirty-three verses of Mañkha, about thirty can be traced in his *Śrīkanṭha-carita*; and almost all of the seventy-seven verses of Śriharṣa, who is generally cited with the designation *nāīṣadha-kṛtī*, are found in his well-known poem. In the same way, almost all the verses of Kalhaṇa in this anthology are traceable in his *Rāja-taraṇgī*.<sup>1</sup> There is, therefore, no doubt as to the identity of these authors. It is not clear, however, if Hemācārya is the famous Jaina teacher and versatile writer Hemacandra; for only one verse of this author is quoted, and it is difficult to locate it in the voluminous writings of the industrious Jaina polygrapher. The case is much the same with Jenduka and Kalyāṇadatta, for it is not clear if they are identical with the poets of the same name<sup>2</sup> mentioned by Mañkha as his contemporaries. While one verse of each of these poets (not traceable anywhere) is given in this anthology, we possess no information about them (except what Mañkha tells us) which would help us in supporting this suggested identification. Even if these identifications of Peterson be presumed, the resulting conclusion would not make any difference. The citation of

<sup>1</sup> Peterson identifies most of these citations. No. 1517, which is not found in *Nāīṣadha*, occurs anonymously in *Kavīndra-vacana-samuccaya* as no. 206 and is probably wrongly attributed to Śriharṣa.

<sup>2</sup> Mañkha (*Śrīkanṭha* xxv. 71-2) calls him Jinduka.

contemporary authors need not by itself present any chronological difficulty; for it is not unreasonable to assume that in compiling an anthology Vallabhadeva aimed at being up to date by including quotations from contemporary poets, most of whom were perhaps already famous and some of whom were undoubtedly Kashmirians.<sup>1</sup>

The third group of poets cited, i.e., those who may be supposed to have lived considerably later than the twelfth century, may again be classed into two groups: (a) those whose identity cannot be taken as clearly established, and (b) those who can be identified with some amount of certainty. In the first of these groups fall Amṛtadatta (with the honorific title *bhāgavata*) and Arjunadeva. Peterson suggests that Amṛtadatta was a court-poet of Shihāb-ud-Dīn, whom he places, on the authority of Cunningham, in A.D. 1835; while he proposed to identify Arjunadeva with the Paramāra prince Arjunavarmādeva, who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century and wrote a commentary<sup>2</sup> on the *Amaru-sātaka*, in which he refers to Muñja Vākpatirāja as predecessor. It is difficult to accept these identifications in the absence of sufficient data. The verse no. 609 in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, attributed to Amṛtadatta, is explained in the verse which immediately precedes it (no. 608) as Shihāb-ud-Dīn's challenge to an intending invader of Kashmir. From this Peterson concludes that Amṛtadatta was one of the court-poets of Shihāb-ud-Dīn. But no work of Amṛtadatta, except a few verses in the anthologies, is known to exist; and the evidence of the anthologies and later citations is not consistent, but points to an earlier date. One of Amṛtadatta's

<sup>1</sup> Contemporary quotations are not unusual in anthologies, as instances of it are not rare in *Sārīgadharapaddhati* and *Saduktikarṇḍī*. The probability or fact that some of these authors lived beyond the middle of the twelfth century into another decade or two is of no serious consequence to our conclusion. Sarvānanda's reference to a contemporary anthology, again, need not be taken as unusual in a technical treatise. Thus Ruyyaka quotes in his *Alaṅkāra-saṅgraha* (ed. Kāvyamālā, 35, p. 93) from Kalhaṇa (*Rāja-tāra*<sup>2</sup>, iv, 441), which work was not completed till A.D. 1150, as well as from *Srikāṣṭha-carita* of his own pupil Mañkha, written about A.D. 1145. In a lexicon, as in a work on poetics or grammar, such utilization of "modern" works is not out of place but really admirable.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Kāvyamālā 18, Bombay, 1916.

verses cited in the *Subhāṣitāvali* (no. 43) is also given anonymously in the *Kaśīndra-vacana-samuccaya* (no. 31); but this latter anthology quotes no other poet who is known to be of a later date than A.D. 1000.<sup>1</sup> Amṛtadatta has, again, a verse in *Saduktī-karnāmyīta* (ed. Bibl. Ind. p. 147) in which he extols the beauty of the ladies of Uṭtarāpatha. The date of this anthology is known to be A.D. 1206. It is also noteworthy that the verse no. 43 of Amṛtadatta is cited anonymously by Mammāṭa, who himself is quoted by Vallabhadeva and who cannot be placed later than the end of the eleventh century.<sup>2</sup> All these facts would throw doubt on the identification proposed by Peterson and render a revision of Amṛtadatta's date necessary. Of Arjunadeva, only one verse (no. 1822) is quoted in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, and it cannot be traced in the only known commentary of Arjunavarmadeva, with whom Peterson seeks to identify him. There are hardly any available data which would justify this identification, which must still be regarded as a mere conjecture.

Greater difficulty is presented by those authors who can be identified with some amount of probability or certainty with authors who are known to have lived after the twelfth century. These are Rājānaka Jonarāja and Śrī-Bakapāṇḍita. The title *rājānaka* of the former would indicate that Jonarāja was probably a Kashmirian; but there is no other evidence<sup>3</sup> which would enable us to identify him definitely with Jonarāja who is known to have continued the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī* and lived in Kashmir in the reign of Zain-ul-Ābidīn in the beginning of the fifteenth century. One Śrī-Baka is mentioned in Śrīvara's continuation of the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī*, and is known to have flourished in the reign of the prince named above. The verse no. 2633 of the *Subhāṣitāvali* explains that no. 2632 was composed by Śrī-Baka for the delectation of Zain-ul-Ābidīn. This somewhat pedestrian verse, however, is composed in the ordinary *anuṣṭubh*-metre, and is couched in a strange form which introduces the poet in the first person :

śrī-jainollābhādīnārtham̄ śloko'yam̄ cātu-miśritah̄ |  
śrī-bakena mayākāri vāride hima-varṣinī ||

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, Introduction, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> See S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, i. pp. 158 f.

<sup>3</sup> None of the three verses attributed to Jonarāja by Vallabhadeva are traceable in Jonarāja's continuation of the *Rāja-taraṅgiṇī*.

The genuineness of these references to historical personages cannot be doubted; but it is not clear if these verses have not found their way into the anthology at some later time. If we are to rely on Sarvānanda's date and his citation of the anthology and its compiler, there is no other alternative but to regard these verses as later interpolations into the work. From Peterson's own account in the Preface, it is evident that the *Subhāṣitāvali* was much studied in Kashmir; and the first MS of the work, which he received from Pandit Durgāprasad, is described by him as being the one which the Pandit "had himself used when a pupil in Kashmir". In an anthology which was in current use, it could not have been difficult to interpolate at a later time verses of contemporary authors relating to well-known princes. This may be suspected from the fact that Peterson's manuscript *C* interpolates verses which are not found in *A*, *B* and *D*, and which Peterson himself believes to be inconsistent with what he considers to have been the original text. This suspicion gains support also from the readings of the South Indian MS of the *Subhāṣitāvali* referred to by Ramakrishna Kavi<sup>1</sup>, which gives verses and names not traceable, or ascribed to different authors, in the printed edition of the text.

We may now summarize what we have tried to discuss above in this way:—

(1) Peterson had good reasons to assign the *Subhāṣitāvali* to a date not earlier than the fifteenth century from the reference in one of the verses to Zain-ul-Ābidīn, and from the probability that some of the poets included were contemporaneous with that prince.

(2) But Sarvānanda undoubtedly knew this anthology, which he cites and quotes from, along with the name of the compiler.

(3) Sarvānanda gives the date of his commentary (in which this citation occurs) as A.D. 1160.

(4) There is no reason (apart from the conflict with the

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Avantisundari-kathā*, p. 4; Preface to *Caturbhāṣī*, pp. ii, iv. The MS copy of the *Subhāṣitāvali* mentioned in the *Report of the Working the Peripatetic Party of the Govt. Oriental MSS. Library, Madras*, during 1916-19 (p. 40) does not contain the name of the compiler, and appears to be a different work.

accepted date of the *Subhāṣitāvali*) to doubt or dispute this date given by Sarvānanda of his own commentary.

(5) If we are to accept the limit supplied by Sarvānanda's date, we must consider all references to or verses of later authors or personages in the anthology as interpolations.

(6) Sarvānanda's reference in A.D. 1160 to the *Subhāṣitāvali* and its author, and his quotation from it, supply the lower limit to its date, and do not justify such a late date for the anthology as the fifteenth century assigned by Peterson.

(7) The quotation in this anthology from poets who lived about A.D. 1150 makes it probable that it could not have been compiled very far from this date.

J.R.A.S., 1927.

## SARVĀNANDA AND VALLABHADEVA

In his very interesting article in *BSOS*, vol. v, pt. i, pp. 27 f. on my suggested date of the *Subhāṣitāvali* of Vallabhadeva (*JRAS*, 1927, pp. 471 f.), Prof. A. B. Keith tries his best to minimize the importance of the passage in Sarvānanda's commentary, which not only makes a reference to the Kāśmitraka Vallabhadeva but actually cites verse no. 726 from his *Subhāṣitāvali*. Professor Keith expresses his belief that the citation is "merely an interpolation"; but as this statement probably appeared too sweeping, he hastens to add that it is rather "an intelligent addition of some scribe". This may, indeed, be a facetious way of solving the problem; but the problem does not appear to be so easy, and the question of interpolation is one on which it does not help to be dogmatic in the absence of definite and fairly conclusive evidence.

Professor Keith's arguments on this question are far from convincing. I cannot agree with his view that the passage<sup>1</sup> in question is precisely of the kind that can be interpolated with ease, for it is neither irrelevant nor haphazard. On this point no precise argument is possible except the impression one derives from the context in which the particular passage occurs, as well as from general scholastic practice, which does not preclude citation of an illustration to explain a somewhat unusual usage. Reading the text in question again without any decided bias in any direction, I cannot find anything in it which would justify me in holding that it is an interpolation; and the onus of proving that it is such lies on those who allege it. Professor Keith speaks of "the curious mode of citation"; but there is nothing extraordinary in the citation of the name of the author along with the name of the work from which the quotation is made. Nor is it a fact that no parallel can be found to this procedure in the rest of the *Tīka-sarvasva*, as Professor Keith alleges. It is true that Sarvānanda's general procedure is to cite briefly either the name of the author or

<sup>1</sup> *Nāmaśāṅgānuśāsana* of Amara with the *Tīkā-sarvasva* of Sarvānanda, ed. Trivandrum, 1914-17, pt. ii, p. 130.

that of the work, most often in a contracted form; but such citations are also to be found:

Pt. ii, p. 21: *tathā hi sāhitya-kalpataruṇā śrī-pavyokena vāsanā-maṇijaryāṁ bhanitam—sa jayati*, etc.

Pt. ii, p. 32: *talhā ca saṁhitāyāṁ varāhah*.

Or, in another form:

Pt. i, p. 34: *iti dhātu-pārāyane pūrvacandrah*.

Professor Keith also finds it extraordinary that not merely the name but also the description Kāśmīraka should be employed in the citation; but I fail to see anything unusual in distinguishing an author by locality, especially when such a differentiation is useful in marking the Vallabhadeva of the *Subhāgitāvali* from the scholiast Vallabhadeva, whom also Sarvānanda quotes twice simply as Vallabha with a pointed reference to his commentaries on *Śiśupāla* (pt. ii, p. 23) and *Kumāra* (pt. ii, p. 350). It does not help critical scholarship to suspect interpolation at every step, simply because the particular passage may happen to be at variance with accepted opinion with regard to the date of the somewhat dubious text of an anthology. He must have indeed been a very "intelligent" scribe who could not only find an apt illustration from an anthology but also give the name and precise description of its compiler.

Professor Keith's next argument that Sarvānanda's text in general is suspiciously corrupt does not appear to possess much weight. At least, the authenticity of the passage in question receives support from the fact that the reference also occurs independently in the manuscript noticed by Sesagiri Sastri in his *Report* (No. 2, p. 26). Professor Keith, however, attempts to support his general argument of a faulty text by referring to a passage which Sarvānanda purports to quote from *Durghaṭa* but which is given entirely differently in the *Durghaṭa-vṛtti* of Śaraṇadeva, which Professor Keith takes to be the work cited by Sarvānanda. It is, however, not clear at all that the *Durghaṭa-vṛtti* of Śaraṇadeva was actually meant by Sarvānanda, for neither the full title nor the author's name appears. It would seem, on the other hand, that it is not a case of confusion or faulty text-tradition, but of a reference probably to another unknown or lost work, which dealt with *durghaṭa* usages in the same way as Śaraṇadeva's work does. Aufrecht notes a

*Durghaṭa* by Rakṣita, presumably Maitreya Rakṣita, which is quoted by Ujjvaladatta in his commentary on the *Uṇḍī-sūtras* (ed. Aufrecht, ii. 57; iii. 160; iv. 1). This supposition that Sarvānanda refers to a work other than that of Śaraṇadeva gains further support from the fact that while Śaraṇadeva's work, as known from its second verse, was not composed till A.D. 1172, Sarvānanda himself gives the date of composition of his own work as A.D. 1160. It is not maintained that Sarvānanda's text, as it stands, is faultless. We must make allowance for misquotations, often made from memory, usual in commentaries, for even a careful writer like Mammata sometimes misquotes; but it cannot be said, in the absence of definite evidence, that Sarvānanda's work errs very much in this direction. Nor can we deduce from such misquotations, even if they occur, that the text-tradition is faulty. At any rate, it has not been proved yet that such liberty has been taken in the text of Sarvānanda as would admit the possibility of regarding the passage in question as an interpolation.

The problem, therefore, is certainly not as simple as Professor Keith would like us to think, and Sarvānanda's citation of Vallabhadeva cannot be so complacently dismissed. Professor Keith's contention really narrows down the question to two main issues which are in the nature of alternatives, viz. (i) whether we should regard, as Professor Keith maintains, that the passage in Sarvānanda, which refers to and quotes from Kāśmīraka Vallabhadeva's *Subhāṣitāvali* is "an intelligent addition of some scribe", or (ii) whether the poetical quotations in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, which conflict with the date of Vallabhadeva thus indicated by Sarvānanda's reference and quotation (assuming the passage to be genuine), are to be regarded, as I suggested, as later interpolations in a work which is admittedly a compilation or an anthology. It is difficult indeed to balance the probabilities, and I fully admitted the difficulty in my previous article; but it is clear that no substantial reason has yet been urged for regarding Sarvānanda's passage as an interpolation in the text, and that therefore there is no other alternative than take the *Subhāṣitāvali* as prior in date to Sarvānanda's commentary in which this passage occurs. Professor Keith imagines that his views have been shared by other scholars; but so far as I know, attention

has never been drawn to the passage in question, nor have the difficulties which this passage has raised ever been discussed. It is true that the acceptance of my suggestion would involve the assumption of a large number of interpolations of verses of presumably later poets into the present text of the *Subhāṣitāvali*; but the *Subhāṣitāvali*, as I have already shown, was an anthology in current use (as opposed to the *Tikā-sarvasva*, whose manuscripts even have become rare), whose text cannot be and has not been regarded as possessing an inviolable sanctity, and in which it would have been easy to interpolate at later times verses of reputed, especially Kashmirian, authors. As I have discussed this aspect of the question at some length in my previous article on the subject, and as Professor Keith's criticism does not make any fresh suggestion on this point, I refrain from recapitulating my arguments here. It is somewhat surprising, however, to find Professor Keith asserting that "reason suggests that it is more logical to suppose one interpolation in the *Tikā-sarvasva* than many in the *Subhāṣitāvali*". It is certainly a more simple procedure, but I cannot see how it is more logical; for it is not good logic to measure the balance of probability, always and especially in this particular case, by the mere quantity of interpolations in the respective texts. To a critical inquiry it is immaterial whether the number of interpolations in the one text or the other is one or many, so long as other facts may be adduced to point to the reasonable probability of regarding a passage or passages as genuine or interpolated. In spite of Professor Keith's very able, if somewhat unwarranted, arguments, nothing definite has yet been urged to prove that Sarvānanda's passage is in reality an interpolation into his text; would it not be more logical to suppose that the passages in the *Subhāṣitāvali*, which really conflict with the date suggested by Sarvānanda's reference, are later interpolations, in a work which was in the nature of a current anthological compilation?

Professor Keith very pertinently refers to the negative value of my suggestion; for the date achieved would hardly be of any practical use when the suspicion of interpolation is inseparable from the text for which the new date is obtained. I must admit that the result obtained by me has not been very encouraging from the practical point of view; but at the same

time it makes clear the necessity of re-editing critically the text of the *Subhāṣitāvali* from ampler and better manuscript-material, for it must be admitted that Peterson's materials were not of such a nature as to make his edition the final one, more especially when one considers it in the light of the present inquiry.

*BSOS* v, pt. iii, 1929.

## BEGINNINGS OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION

The cultural origin and early development of civilization in India, a complex civilization which today calls itself Hindu, present a problem which is at once a most difficult and most fascinating one. It has engaged scientific curiosity and investigation for over a century, ever since Sir William Jones, in a famous address delivered before the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1786, had the unerring insight to observe the close connection between the principal languages of Europe and the sacred languages of India and Persia.

### *Supposed Aryan Superiority*

But in the early stages of the inquiry, when facts were too meagre for a proper reconstruction of lost or obscure origins, there was a tendency to supplement the paucity of facts by an abundance of fancy. In the last century, for instance, most scholars, headed by Max Müller, formulated the hypothesis of a highly cultured Aryan race, the prototype of the present-day Europeans and Indians, spreading in ancient times as a great civilizing force. It was surmised that the original inhabitants of India were dark-skinned barbarians, if not actual savages, possessing very little material or intellectual culture. To this land of barbarians came a white race of Aryans who, for the first time, brought with them civilization with its arts and ideals. This civilization was supposed to have been originally of the pastoral type, simple and idyllic, and noble in comparison with the barbaric splendour of Egyptian and Babylonian cultures.

Philology had already suggested the linguistic affinity of these civilizing Aryans with the peoples of Europe; and the sciences of comparative mythology and comparative religion, even in their infancy, could discern striking agreements in the thought-world of the Indo-Aryans with that of the peoples of Greece and Italy and of the Germanic, Celtic, and Slav lands. Their original home was unknown, but a very central place was found in Central Asia, a land of romantic mystery. The aboriginal peoples of India were supposed to have submitted

after a brief but unavailing resistance to the superior Aryans who, as a matter of course, aryanized India by imposing their rule and their civilization on the uncultured dark races. It was thus presumed that all that was great and good and characteristic in Indian culture was evolved by the civilized Aryans ; and whatever was dark and degrading and non-essential was supposed to have been the contribution of the suppressed non-Aryan mentality.

Such was the picture of the origin and foundation of Indian culture drawn by scholars, mostly European, in the last century ; and it found its way into school and college textbooks to become almost canonical. The early Vedic records were at that time the main, if not the only, source of information, and they only confirmed this pro-Aryan bias. The example of the present-day Europeans, spreading through a restless urge as a superior race into the land of darker races and imposing their culture on them, naturally tempted and coloured this hypothesis of a superior and civilizing Aryan people in prehistoric India. As, on the one hand, it flattered the European sense of superiority and was readily accepted in Europe, so, on the other hand, the higher and educated classes in India, who had absorbed the European mentality from their European studies, found no difficulty in subscribing to it, inasmuch as the theory gave them, as the unquestioned descendants of the Aryan conquerors, a sense of glorious origin, as well as the secret satisfaction of a close relationship with their English rulers.

This mental attitude was fostered, no doubt, by various causes. Nothing, or next to nothing, was yet known of the history of the ancient world. Assyriology and Egyptology were just feeling their first steps haltingly. Evidences from archaeology, both historic and prehistoric, in India and Persia, as well as in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and the Aegean arca, were just beginning to be gathered. The facts and principles of comparative philology and comparative mythology were only beginning to be vaguely grasped. There was no other alternative, therefore, but to fall back upon what was our only source of information, viz. the comparatively late Brahmanical literature as found in the Vedic records. In addition to all this, there was in India an absence of social assimilation of

the higher classes with the masses, partly emphasized by the fully defined Brahmanical notions of caste and further aggravated by the disintegrating force of European ideas, which bred in the newly educated Indians a sense of superiority to, and aloofness from, the lower and uneducated groups. So, the theory of civilized and civilizing Aryans, coming with a mission of culture to the dark races, became fully established ; and it was considered rank heresy to question the superiority of the Aryans in any walk of life.

*The Indo-Europeans*

But hard facts in India itself seemed to agree very badly with this complacent reconstruction. Contradictions of mentality language and culture, which are present even now in India and had been present throughout the ages, and of which the Hindu synthesis had in many cases made a badly patched-up job, brought in complications. The most important fact was the presence of the great Dravidian languages in the South and of the Kol-Mundā (Austro-Indian) languages in many parts of northern India, along with distinct types of culture which these linguistic groups indicated. One enveloping Aryan garb, no doubt, covered up these diversities of culture ; but the differences between the old Aryan world and the old Dravidian world sharpened themselves into an outline when facts of Dravidian literature and antiquity began to be contrasted with those of the early Aryans. Now linguistic, palaeontological, ethnological, and anthropological researches into the cultures of ancient peoples who used the Indo-European speech, viz. the Vedic Aryans, the Avestic Iranians, the Homeric Greeks, the Latin races, the Old Slavs, the early Celtic, the Teutonic, and the Scandinavian races coupled with archaeological finds in North and Central Europe, in the Aegean area, in Asia Minor, in Persia, and in India have very seriously assailed the thesis of Indo-European antiquity and superiority in culture by establishing the comparatively recent and crude character of the Indo-European *milieu*, which was far below that of peoples like the Egyptians and Assyrio-Babylonians, who were already possessed of a much older civilization of an advanced type. Ethnologically, it is doubtful if the Indo-Europeans were really one people even at the time when they did not separate, but

linguistically they probably were so. They spoke a fine language which, as we know, became Sanskrit in India, Greek in Greece, and Latin, Teutonic, and other languages in other lands of Europe and Asia.

Their religion, as Meillet has tried to reconstruct it by linguistic researches, was a very primitive and simple affair, but it had some fine and notable features in it. It consisted chiefly in the worship of a sky-father and of the sun, fire, and other beneficent spirits of nature, through the pouring of holy libations. We have no indication as yet of elaborate mythology, or mystery, or ritual, or priesthood. These primitive Indo-Europeans did not of their own initiative make any great advance in intellectual or material culture, but they were a very receptive people who could imbibe and assimilate ideas from others. Thus, culturally they were a backward race when they came in touch with the peoples of the Aegean area, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia, and from these latter they appear to have learnt a great many essentials of progress. The most notable achievement of their own in culture was that they were probably the first to tame the horse.

Their original habitat is still a matter of controversy, but the Central Asian hypothesis is well-nigh gone. It is most probable that they lived originally somewhere in Central or Eastern Europe; and before they broke up and spread, they had just come into the Bronze Age of culture at about the middle of the third millennium B.C. They began to pour down as a force destructive to culture into the rich and highly civilized lands of the South, into Greece and the Aegean area, and into northern Mesopotamia. Tribes or groups of them settled in regions south of the Caucasus, in the Zagros mountains, as a strongly organized and growing body of people with horse-breeding as one of their trades. Some groups of them, like the Manda, the Mitanni and the Harri, seem to have carved out kingdoms for themselves in these regions already in the second millennium B.C. Aryan names of Mitanni chiefs and their gods in the Boghaz Koi records show that the Indo-Iranian modification of the Indo-European people had already taken place in northern Mesopotamia; for these Mitanni chiefs appear as worshipping Mitra, Varuna, Indra, and the Nāsatyas; as bearing names like Artatama, Tusratta, and Suttarna; and as

speaking the Indo-Iranian phase of the language, in which Aryan words like *aika*, *terा*, *pañza*, *satto*, and *nav* are found. The Tell-cl-Amarna tablets of about the same time mention princes with Aryan names like Biridaswa (Bṛhadaśva), Suwardata (Sūryadatta), Yasdata (Yazdāta), and Artamanya. Even the Kassites of Babylon, ruling for several centuries from 1800 B.C. onwards, had borrowed some of their gods from the Aryans, even if they themselves were not Aryans, e.g. Surias, the sun-god; Maruttas, the wind-gods; Bugas (Vedic Bhaga); Simalia (Himālaya), the Queen of Snowy Mountains; and Dakas (Dakṣa), a star-god.

It is clear, therefore, that the Indo-Europeans were penetrating and establishing themselves in the regions of northern Mesopotamia at about 2000 B.C., generally peacefully as horse-dealers and tillers of the soil, but, when occasion demanded, also violently as fighters. Here they gradually evolved the characteristic Indo-Iranian culture in its earliest form, before the Indian Aryans separated from the Iranian. The comparatively simple Indo-European religion soon became a kind of proto-Vedic religion with its complex group of notions, possibly through contact with the peoples of Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, who possessed much older and more organized religious systems. New gods were borrowed, and perhaps here they had the rudimentary idea of Indra as a fighter and slayer of primeval serpents and dragons, much like the Babylonian Marduk. The demonolatry of Babylon with its malignant serpents came to be known and vaguely believed in, and their Babylonian names are preserved in the *Atharva-Veda*. The Indo-Iranians seem to have imbibed also from their neighbours the idea of a hierarchy of gods and a school of priests. Of arts and crafts the simple Indo-Europeans possessed little; they must have, in this new environment, been impressed by the pomp and splendour of the cities and courts of Assyria and Babylonia; and there is evidence to show that some of the material and artistic ideas of their life must have been strongly influenced by those of the Assyrio-Babylonians.

Thus, when the Indo-Aryans came to India, the Indo-European elements in their life and character must have been greatly modified and developed through contact with the peoples in whose lands they sojourned *en route*. The high degree

of civilization testified to by the *Rg-Veda* is thus explicable. They came to India with a composite culture which must have absorbed a great deal of the existing Western Asiatic civilization. The Indo-Aryan populace similarly perhaps was also a complex body, in which the original Indo-European ethnic element, even if it is supposed to have been homogenous, had mingled more or less with Asianic, Caucasian, Assyrian, Elamite and Iranian native elements.

The oldest document that we possess of the Indo-Aryans is, as we all know, the *Rg-Veda*. In spite of its being preserved in India, it had for a long time been taken as a document of the primitive, undivided, and common Indo-European speech and culture, but this view has now been abandoned. There are reasons to suppose that it is essentially an Indian document, though it possesses importance for the historical study of the Indo-European culture as a whole. A great many of its hymns and ideas might have taken shape in Iran in the Indo-Iranian stage of speech and culture, which is equally proto-Vedic and proto-Avestan. It was possibly redacted in India, but much of it might have been brought as a national or tribal heritage, perhaps modified later in the Indo-Aryan stage and supplemented by a large mass of newer and later hymns and ideas developed under a new *milieu* in India, the whole forming into a well-arranged corpus in this ancient document.

Song-craft must have been practised by Indo-Iranians before their differentiation into Indians and Iranians, and the Vedas themselves mention old hymns composed by the forefathers of the *yis*, the *nivids*. Close agreement of metre, language and ideas in both the *Rg-Veda* and the *Avesta* point to a common type as the source, but the Indian colouring in the *Rg-Veda* is strong and unmistakable. At any rate, the opinion is gradually gaining ground that the age of the *Rg-Veda* is not the characteristic Hindu age as we know it today; that is, what is known today as Hindu culture had not yet been fully characterized in this Indo-Aryan document.

#### *Synthesis of cultures: The Kol-Mundās*

In India, the Aryans came in contact with two important types of people, the Dravidians and the Kol-Mundās, as well as the Tibeto-Chinese whom we may dismiss for the present,

as they came into the field at a much later date, when the Hindu culture had been fully characterized and established. The commingling of these three peoples, the Arya, Dravida, and Kol, has resulted in a most remarkable synthesis of culture, viz. the Hindu culture as it is known today. The intermingling had been so close and complex that it is difficult today to disentangle clearly the lines of development; but it is becoming more and more apparent that the Aryans were not single-handed in building up the culture of India, and that the deeper substratum of this culture is to be found in the Kol and Dravidian contributions, which have been no less great.

The Kols are now confined roughly to West Bengal, Chota Nagpur, the north-east of Madras State, and Madhya Pradesh; but on linguistic, ethnic and other grounds, it has been surmised that they were in India even before the Dravidians, and at one time overran the whole of the Gangetic plain from western Himalaya to Bengal in the east, in which last place they were contiguous to their kinsmen, the Mons, the Khemrs, and other peoples who at one time occupied the whole of Indo-China. The language which they speak is distinct from Indo-European, and belongs to a linguistic family to which the name Austric or Austro-Asiatic has been given by Peter Schmidt. This family of languages extends from Indo-China and the Malay Peninsula to the far-off islands of Indonesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia, and even to Madagascar off the south-eastern coast of Africa. It presents also a distinct type of civilisation. It seems, however, that the Kols in India never evolved any really great culture. As represented by their present-day descendants, the Santals, Hos, Mundaris and others, their culture has always been of a primitive type. Most of them, therefore, had been gradually absorbed into the Hindu fold, and they adopted the Aryan speech; but in the course of this absorption, they must have contributed a great deal of their own culture, even if their contributions are mostly submerged in the larger and more powerful Aryan or Dravidian forces. Even where they preserved a more or less complete isolation from the currents of Hindu civilization, it must have been almost impossible for them not to be profoundly influenced by the irresistible influx of Hindu notions. They are thus no longer purely Kol or Austric.

It is necessary, however, even if it is difficult, to separate and restore the Kol or Austric elements; and this can be done partly by a study of the present-day Kol people, and partly also by help derived from a study of their kinsmen from Indo-Chinese and Indonesian sources. When we have some general idea of the real character of Austro-Asiatic thought and culture, we shall be in a position to trace it in ancient and medieval Hindu thought. The brilliant but pioneer studies of Przyluski, Jules Bloch, and Sylvain Lévi have made it clear that a large element of the so-called *desi* or non-Aryan vocabulary of Sanskrit is probably of Kol origin. The fact that common Sanskrit words like *kambala*, *tāmbūla*, *lāngala*, *liṅga*, *sarkarā*, *mukūṭa*, *mayūra*, *kadāla*, *laguda* or *lakuta*, *hārpāsa*, and *bāna* are derived from Kol tongues shows that in certain important aspects of Indian life and culture, there is a substratum of Kol influence. Some customs and ways of life current among primitive Indonesians, who are the kinsmen of the Kols, have their counterparts in those of ancient and modern Indians. Kol myths and legends have been Hinduized in Hindu mythology, for the legends and traditions of a country never die. But thorough investigation into this question has not yet been made.

### *The Dravidians*

The Dravidians, however, were on a higher cultural level than the Kols; and it is they, more than any other people in India, who have contributed important elements in the synthesis of Indian culture. We have seen that the Kols are a people of a definite language- and culture-type, which has its affinity outside India, in Indo-China, in Melanesia, and in Polynesia. The Indo-Aryans are also well known in their affinities; and if their original home is problematic, their connections with other known peoples of ancient times render the problem less of a puzzle. But the Dravidians are a mystery people of the world! Attempts have been made to affiliate them racially with the Abyssinians and linguistically with the Uralic races; such is the wide range followed in the choice of their affinities. From cultural evidence, again, it has been supposed that they were originally a Mediterranean people, and were possibly allied to the ancient Cretans and Lycians. But we cannot yet be definite; and, in reality, we must confess our

ignorance as to when and how they came to India, if they at all came from outside. The Dāsa-Dasyus mentioned in the *Rg-Veda* are usually assumed to have been the aboriginal peoples of Gandhāra and the Punjab, but these need not be the only people so characterized. Scholars have sought to equate these words with Daha and Dahyu of Old Persian, while it has been pointed out that Dahai was actually a tribe mentioned by later Persians and Greeks as living to the south-east of the Caspian Sea. It is probable that the *Rg-Vedic* Dāsa-Dasyus were the Dravidian-speaking Mediterranean races. The *Rg-Veda* often refers to the *anāsa* (flat-nosed), *kṛṣṇavac* (dark-skinned), *myṛdhrauč* (of hostile speech), *śīhnadeva* (phallus-worshipping) Dāsa-Dasyus who from their cities and forts (*pur*) resisted the Aryans. We may conjecture that the existence of these peoples in southern Punjab and Sind may have prevented Aryan movement southward along the course of the Indus, and directed it eastward to the Gangetic plains. Whatever may have been the reason of Aryan expansion towards the east, Sind was pre-eminently a land of Dāsa-Dasyus, and so an impure country to which entry is forbidden by the later *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*.

#### *Their contribution to Indian culture*

Thus it seems probable that they were living in India before the coming of the Indian Aryans. Although southern India is now their stronghold, there is ample evidence, linguistic and otherwise, to show that at one time they extended from Baluchistan to Bengal. Ample evidence of an independent Dravidian culture in ancient India is now found, and its presence is a direct challenge to the thesis that Hindu culture is the work of the Indo-Aryans alone. It is not possible here to enter into details, but one or two facts which will make the point clear may be referred to. Philologists of Dravidian and Indo-Aryan language have demonstrated how the Aryan speech has been profoundly influenced, since the Vedic times, by Dravidian languages in phonetics, in vocabulary, in syntax, and in the general modification of grammatical forms. Dravidian influences on other aspects of culture have also been gradually recognized, and are now becoming a matter of such general acceptance among scholars that it is not necessary here

to dilate upon it. Perhaps in this matter, especially regarding religious notions, it is difficult to ascertain what the Aryans absorbed from the Dravidians and what they took from their neighbours and kinsmen outside India. The problem is further complicated by the extreme likelihood of the Dravidian and Kol worlds of culture having been inextricably intermingled, in the Ganges valley especially, before the coming of the Aryans. At the same time, it is becoming clear that a great deal of the fundamental bases of Hindu thought and Hindu religious notions, including myths and legends, on the one hand, and ritual, on the other, are not Aryan in their origin, but probably Dravidian, or Dravidian and Kol mixed.

We find, for instance, that most of the common notions that dominate the Hindu thought-world today are absent in the *Rg-Veda*. Old Aryan ideas and institutions which we find in the Vedas give place to something new and different in the course of time. Some of these are undoubtedly the result of natural or logical development, but there are others which are inexplicable except by a study of Dravidian or other non-Aryan notions in ancient and medieval India. One most striking instance is the modification of the *Rg-Vedic* idea of worship, which originally consisted of *homa* or the ritual of fire-sacrifice, a form which is certainly Indo-Iranian and most likely Indo-European. The characteristic Hindu form of worship today is *pūjā*, the idea and ritualism of which are entirely different from those of *homa*, which has in later times taken a secondary place, being confined now to those castes who claim descent from the Aryans. The *homa* consisted in an invocation of the anthropomorphic gods to receive through the fire the offering of butter, cakes, flesh and spirituous drink, with the idea of receiving some benefits in return for the offering. But in *pūjā*, which is the ordinary Hindu ritual today, there is offering of water, flowers, leaves, fruits, grains, incense and perfume, often accompanied by music and dancing. The offering is made to the deity, whose living presence is presumed in the consecrated image before the worshipper, there being always a sense of intimate and intense personal devotion or *bhakti*, and not merely that of Vedic *graddhā* or belief.

The Vedic *homa* or *yajña* has thus been gradually replac-

ed in Indian religious history by the *pūjā*, which takes a larger and more characteristic place. It has been maintained that the *pūjā* in all probability was a non-Aryan, possibly, Dravidian, ritual, with Kol influence also in it. At least in its origin it is not Aryan and is not found among early Indo-Europeans outside India. The word *pūjā* itself is probably also non-Aryan in origin, as it has no cognate in Indo-European languages, as the word *homa* has. In the same way, phallus worship is probably originally non-Aryan; and the word *linga* itself has been shown to be of Kol origin. Animal cults, like serpent-worship (which was also Babylonian), monkey-worship and cow-worship, have undoubtedly developed in India through Dravidian-Kol influence; for even if anthropomorphism is a characteristic of Vedic religion, we have no trace of zoo-morphism among the early Indo-Europeans.

Besides the above peoples or ethno-linguistic groups, there is evidence of the presence on the coast-lines of India (in South Baluchistan, South India, and in the Andamans) of a Negrito people, who were probably the original inhabitants of India and who were probably either killed off or absorbed by the Kols and the Dravidians. On these points little can be said here, and much of the subject is still a matter of speculation and research.

#### *Corroboration from Archaeology*

What has been said above on the basis of ethnic and linguistic evidences is also corroborated by archaeology. We have also received from different parts of India the usual prehistoric objects in plenty, the palaeolithic and neolithic implements, crude pottery, beads, cave paintings, cromlechs, and dolmens, as well as indications of burial customs from prehistoric burial sites. Some copper implements and ornaments have also been found. All these, which have been collected and catalogued in various museums, reveal that India like other countries, passed through Palaeolithic and Neolithic Age, and that there was also an Age of copper implements. We do not know yet to what people we are to ascribe these primitive Stone and Copper Age weapons. It has been surmised that the Old Stone Age weapons belong to the oldest people of India, the Negrito, now mostly extinct or absorbed; and that

the New Stone Age weapons belong to the ancestors of the Kols, while the Copper Age implements can be ascribed equally to the early Kols and the early Dravidians.

### *The Bronze Age*

For a long time, there was no evidence to prove a Bronze Age in India; and the Iron Age was thought to have followed the Copper Age. Bronze articles have now been found in different parts of India; and the most important find was at Adittannallur in Tirunelveli District in the extreme South. The culture-type presented by these finds, as also the burial customs discovered in the tombs there, has, curiously, their counterparts in the old tombs and finds at Crete, Cyprus, Anatolia, and to some extent at Gehareh near Babylon. Affinity with Crete and Cyprus seems to be greater in the crouching position of the dead body in the sarcophagi, and in the finds of gold masks and headbands. The tombs of Adittannallur are in the Dravidian country; and by measurement and other tests, the Adittannallur skull have been found to agree with the typical Tamil skull. The presumption naturally has been that the Bronze and Iron Age culture of Adittannallur was that of early Dravidians in South India; and an attempt has been made on these cultural evidences to seek their affinity with the Cretans and Lyicians, on the one hand, and with the Sumerians, on the other, as has been already stated.

### *Harappa and Mohenjo-daro*

A number of discoveries have been made in the excavation at Harappa (1920-24) in Montgomery District in the Punjab and at Mohenjo-daro (1922-29) in Larkana District in Sind, which bid fair to reveal a new chapter of prehistoric India, having a bearing on subsequent culture-history, and which still awaits investigation. These two cultures, at Harappa and at Mohenjo-daro, indicate an area of civilization which extended from Sind far up into the Punjab; and though the two sites are 400 miles apart, they seem to be linked up with each other, and the discoveries in many points agree with those of Adittannallur. Through Sir John Marshall's monumental publication, the characteristics of this early Indus valley civilization have become sufficiently widely known to make it un-

necessary for us to do more than briefly mention it. It represents a civilization which was chiefly of chalcolithic times, but many strata have been revealed probably dating further back. It is, however, certainly not Aryan, and goes back to a period which is probably prior to the advent of Aryans in India.

The discoveries show a highly advanced civilization with a complicated town-life and developed ideas of art. The comparatively high standard of domestic comfort attained is proved by the solidity and internal arrangement of the houses built with burnt bricks and provided with baths, hypocausts, and elaborate drains, and by the lay-out of the paved streets and other similar evidence. Metal-craft, as shown by plentiful bronze and copper objects and gold jewellery, was fully developed. The skill displayed in the very large number of engraved seals containing figures of animals and undecipherable inscriptions, as well as in some figures of stone, terracotta and bronze, indicates the rise of the true glyptic art. The use of stone implements still survived to a limited extent. Painted pottery, mostly showing geometrical designs in black on red ground, is common and uniform in type throughout all strata, while polychrome ware appears in a later layer. Numerous figures of a mother-goddess, representations of a god with emblems like those of Śiva, of sacred bulls, and of objects peculiar to the Śaiva cults are interesting indications of some forms of worship corresponding to later Śakti and Śaiva cults. The image of a *yogin* found at Mohenjo-daro may indicate that we owe *yoga*, as a mode of contemplation, to the non-Aryan authors of the Indus civilization. Wide prevalence of charms and amulets in modern Hindu society may also be, to a large extent, a heritage coming down from the people of Mohenjo-daro, where a large number of seals found seem to have been used for similar purposes.

As regards the disposal of the dead, the evidence is as yet too meagre. Examples of post-cremation burials in cinerary urns, as well as fractional burials after exposure of dead bodies to beasts and birds, have been found; but no regular burial ground has been discovered to prove the prevailing practice. Examination of the comparatively few skulls found seems to point to four distinct ethnic types having been represented in the population of the town.

Attention has been drawn to the striking similarity of some of these objects of art with those that have been found at Nal in Baluchistan, at Anau near Merv to the north-east of Persia excavated some time ago by the American, Pumelly, and also at Elam in western Persia. Only some years ago, Sir Aurel Stein spoke of the discovery of the remains of a similar culture in the Zhob valley in Baluchistan, where a large number of earthen vessels, flint blades, arrowheads, alabaster cups, bone implements, and copper and bronze objects have been found. A close relation to the culture of Mohenjo-daro is attested to by terra-cotta figures of a mother-goddess, humped bulls, and large burnt bricks used for a carefully constructed drain.

From these indications, it appears that this was a culture which spread from India to western Persia; and its direct connection with the culture of ancient Sumer has been presumed. Through the discovery at Susa and at two Mesopotamian sites of some seals engraved with the characters of the as-yet-undeciphered Indus valley script, it is very probable that the Mohenjo-daro remains date approximately from the third millennium B.C. The makers of this remarkable civilization were defeated by the Aryans who forced them to retreat towards the south and south-east, where remains of similar civilizations are being excavated. The question naturally arises: Who were the people among whom this type of culture existed? No precise answer can yet be given. A connection with the Mediterranean people, the Cretans and others, has been suggested, while Assyrio-Babylonian scholars have pointed out affinity with similar antiquities from Susa and Babylon dating from pre-Semitic Sumerian times. It has also been suggested that the Harappa and Mohenjo-daro remains should be connected with the original Dravidians. The problems presented by these discoveries have not yet been thoroughly investigated, but the question has been raised as to whether and how far Cretan, Lycian, Sumerian, Elamite, and Dravidian are connected. A solution to these cognate problems would in future bring in a truer knowledge of ancient race and culture-movements which are at the basis of Indian civilization. And it will win for us from oblivion another chapter in the history of human cultural endeavour.

*Conclusion*

Thus, we see that the foundations of Indian culture are complex and its beginnings obscure. Its development has not been homogeneous, but polygenous. It is based on early Dravidian and Kol cultures with certain other elements surviving from still earlier peoples, and with certain elements brought in by the Indo-Aryans. The Aryan civilization was not purely Indo-European when it came to India; there were considerable Asianic, Mesopotamian, and other extra-Indian elements in it. The Kol-Dravidian elements, which probably formed a deeper basis of Indian culture than the Aryan, may have in their turn had affinities with some of these extra-Indian elements. The great importance of the Aryan element lies in the fact that it succeeded in giving Indian culture its form and unity, its discipline and order, but it is also highly probable that the pre-Aryan Kol-Dravidian element forms its deeper substratum.

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## WOMEN-SEERS IN VEDIC LITERATURE

Of great women in Vedic literature our information is unfortunately scanty and uncertain. Although some women appear to have been heroic enough to take part in big fights, they have had no place in political life; the *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* (4.7.4) expressly says that men go to the assembly, and not women. In the time of the *Upaniṣads* we have evidence that some women shared in the intellectual interests of the day, as is exemplified by Yājñavalkya's two wives, one of whom was interested in his philosophical discussion, the other not. As scholars or teachers some other women are mentioned, such as Gārgī, who tried to embarrass even the great Yājñavalkya by her searching questions. But these instances probably form exceptions rather than the rule; for from the time of the Brāhmaṇas we find distinct traces of the lowering of the position of women. No doubt, the wife was a regular participator in the sacrificial offerings of her husband; but her right of independently offering oblation appears to have been restricted in later times. She was given an honoured place indeed as mistress in her husband's home, but she was still subservient to his will: and in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (1. 9. 2. 12; 10. 5. 2. 9) we have a reference to the rule that the wife should take her food, not with but after the husband. Although the *Kātyāyana Śrauta-sūtra* (1. 1. 7) remarks that the Śruti 'does not discriminate between man and woman,' this Brāhmaṇa (4. 4. 2. 13) declares that 'women own neither themselves nor an inheritance.' The marriage tie was indeed not lightly regarded, but polygamy was freely allowed, and the obligation of chastity was laid on the weaker sex alone. All this makes it doubtful whether the decidedly high ideal of family life, evinced by the implied equality of *Patni* (wife) as the counterpart of *Pati* (husband), was always actually fulfilled; but there is evidence to show that the women's own sphere continued to be the home, where her authority was seldom disputed (*Taitt. Sam.* 6. 2. 1. 1; *Sata. Br.* 5. 2. 1. 10).

But in the time of the *Rg-Veda* women appear to have

enjoyed greater freedom and equality. We hear of several women-seers whose hymns are said to have been preserved in this earliest record of Indo-Aryan culture. Ancient works on *Rg-Vedic* literature like the *Byhad-devatā* of Śaunaka and the several *Anukramanīs*, all of which must have been composed some time before the Christian era, record the tradition of their authorship, and ascribe to them sometimes single verses and sometimes groups of them running into whole hymns. The validity of the ascription has sometimes been doubted by modern scholars, with the suggestion that these hymns were later compositions based on traditional myths and legends; but nothing convincing has been adduced in support of this suggestion.

*In the Rg-Veda*

We have a list of twenty-seven women-seers, called *Brahma-vādinīs*, in the *Rg-veda*. Of these some, like *Aditi*, *Juhū*, *Indrāṇī*, *Saramā*, *Urvaśī*, *Rātrī* and *Sūryā*, can be counted as divine or semi-divine beings of a mythological character; while some, like *Śrī*, *Medhā*, *Dakṣinā* and *Śraddhā*, are obvious personifications of abstract ideas. Leaving them aside, we have only nine or ten *Brahma-vādinīs* who can be regarded as real human beings responsible for the verses assigned to them. They are *Viśvāvara*, *Apālā*, *Ghoṣā*, *Godhā*, wife of *Vasukra*, sister of *Agastya*, *Lopāmudrā*, *Śaśvatī* and *Romaśā*. To this should be added the name of *Vāc*, but it has been doubted whether she was a real woman-seer. The term *Brahma-vādinī* in this connection need not be taken in a deeper philosophical sense. The verses themselves show that the women-seers do not claim any higher knowledge of *Brahman* as it was understood in later times, but they only praise the various deities they worship and speak only of their own joys and sorrows of life. The term *Brahman*, therefore, should be taken here properly in the earlier Vedic sense of prayer or devotion.

*Vāc* : The most remarkable hymn ascribed to *Vāc*, which occurs in the tenth *Māṇḍala* of the *Rg-Veda* (10. 125), is known today as the *Devī-sūkta*. It is employed in the autumnal worship of the (goddess) *Devī*, for the Śākta worshippers of the goddess take this *Rg-Vedic* composition as the basis of their devotion. But the account given in the subsidiary Vedic liter-

ature is different. There the hymn is said to have been uttered by Vāc, daughter of the sage Ambhrṇa (Vāgāmbhrṇi). But since the woman-seer in this hymn conceives, in a pantheistic mood, her unity with the universe as the source and regulating spirit of all things, it has been presumed that the name Vāc (Word) is merely metaphorical, and that there never existed any real woman-seer of that name. Hence it became possible, in later times, to identify the seer Vāc with Vāc Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech, or with the abstract Śabda-Brahman (Logos), or even with Śakti as the principle of primeval Energy, and to elaborate on this basis various mystical interpretations of the hymn. But the older evidence of Vedic literature itself goes against this presumption, and very clearly regards this hymn to be the composition of a particular woman-seer, whose lofty inspiration has, thus, given it a high place in the history of Indian thought. In her impassioned utterance she tells us:

I walk with the Rudras and the Vasus,  
 I, with the Ādityas and All-the-gods ;  
 I bear up the two, Mitra and Varuṇa,  
 I, Indra and Agni, I, the two Aśvins.  
 I sustain the pressed-out *soma*,  
 I, Tvaṣṭṛ, Pūṣan and Bhaga ;  
 I give wealth to him that brings oblation.  
 To the worshipper devout, and him that presses *soma*.  
 I am the queen, the bestower of riches,  
 I was the first to know among the holy ones ;  
 Me, the gods put in many places,  
 Making me enter and dwell abundantly.  
 By me, whoever eats food, and whoever sees,  
 Whoever breathes, and whoever hears what is said,  
 They dwell in me, though they know it not ;  
 Listen, O wise, to thee I say what is true.  
 Verily I myself speak all this,  
 What is welcome to the gods and men ;  
 Whoever I love I make strong,  
 I make him a Brahmā, a sage and a seer.

I spread out the bow of Rudra for him  
 To slay the unbeliever with his arrow ;  
 I make strife among the people ;  
 I pervade all the earth and heaven.

I give birth to father on the head of all this ;  
 My source is in the midst of waters in the sea ;  
 Thence I spread through all the worlds,  
 And touch this heaven with my eminence.

It is I who blow as the wind blows,  
 Taking hold of all the worlds ;  
 Past heaven and past this earth  
 I have by greatness become such.

The mystical exaltation expressed in this hymn, which feels identity of self with the entire universe, is somewhat strange in the predominantly practical and polytheistic age of the *Rg-Veda*; but it is not altogether unexpected, having been expressed in various ways in other hymns, especially in the Hiranyagarbha-Puruṣa hymns of a pantheistic character. To seek unity in the midst of diversity is a natural trend of human thought; but here 'it' is not any systematic philosophical thinking but essentially emotional realization of what is transcendental that gives a distinctive significance to this powerful hymn. By characterizing this utterance as 'The Word Speaketh' a foreign scholar has rightly emphasized its importance as an instance of divine inspiration acknowledged in most religious systems; and from this point of view it is clear that a wider or universal interpretation is not impossible. It is no wonder, therefore, that this hymn was made the basis of Śakti-worship in later times. The author, whoever she was, was undoubtedly one of the great women of the Vedic Age.

*Vibuvārā* : In the composition of the other nine women-seers we have no trace of such high thought or feeling. Nevertheless, these women of ancient times give unrestrained expression to the intimate joys and sorrows of their homely life; and the hymns, however scanty, are of importance, not only as showing the high position occupied by them in Rg-Vedic times, but also as giving a glimpse into the inner heart of the woman. Of these, the hymn of six verses assigned

to Viśvavārā of the Atri family occurs in the fifth (5. 28), the family book of the Atris. Apparently a married woman, she approaches the blazing sacrificial Fire at dawn, with her face towards the east, offers oblations to the gods and prays for love and happiness in wedded life. We translate here the first three verses :

The fully kindled Fire, bright against the firmament,  
Facing the dawn, shines far and wide;  
Viśvavārā proceeds towards the east with obeisance,  
Praising the gods, with oblation and ladle full of  
butter.

Fully kindled, O Fire, you are the lord of immortality;  
You follow and bring welfare to him who offers  
oblations;

The worshipper whom you approach brings all his wealth.  
And, O Fire, he spreads his hospitality before you.

Repress our foes, O Fire, to ensure our great good fortune;  
Let the riches brought by you be of the highest  
excellence;

Make wedded life fully restrained.

Overpower the strength of those who are hostile to us.

From this devotional hymn it is clear that Viśvavārā not only composed the hymn, but herself performed the sacrifice in her own right. This right appears to have been withdrawn in the age of the Brāhmaṇas.

*Apālā* : In the hymn (8. 91) assigned to Apālā, we have a strange mixture of myth and reality. Although married like Viśvavārā, Apālā, also of the Atri family, was less fortunate. Afflicted with a skin disease, which would not allow hair to grow on her body, she was discarded by her husband. How she met and worshipped Indra in a curious way and became freed from the disease is the subject-matter of her hymn, which occurs, not in the family book of the Atris, but in the eighth book of the *Rg-Veda*. Knowing that the soma-juice was Indra's favourite drink, Apālā, going out to fetch water, picked up a Soma plant on her way, and began to crush it between her teeth for extracting the juice for Indra. As Indra heard the sound, he thought it proceeded from soma-pressing stones.

He hastened there, and drank the Soma from Apālā's lips. He gave her three boons, which made her father's bald head, his barren field and her hairless limb grow abundantly. Then passing Apālā three times through the aperture of the cart and the yoke, Indra made her fair-skinned and freed from disease. From the intimacy thus indicated, the *Bṛhad-devatā* gives the legend as an instance of a god falling in love with an earthly maiden. The incident is thus described in the hymn with the praise of Indra :

A maiden, going to fetch water,  
    found a Soma plant in the path ;  
Returning homeward she spoke :  
    'For Indra I press you, for Śakra I press you'.

You who go from house to house,  
    a hero shining in your glory,  
Come and drink this Soma pressed by my teeth,  
    along with fried grains, and cakes and chants of praise.

We would know you, Indra, but we know you not ;  
O drops of Soma, flow for Indra slowly, yet more slowly.

Many times may Indra make us strong,  
Many times may Indra give us wealth ;  
Many times wandering with husband's hatred,  
May we now be united with Indra.

O Indra, make these three places grow abundantly.  
My father's head and his field and my limb ;  
Make fertile this field of ours which is barren,  
Make my limb and my father's head full of hair.

Three times did you purify Apālā  
Through the hole of the chariot and the yoke.  
And you made her, O Indra Śatakratu,  
Have a skin resplendent like the sun.

*Ghoṣā* : Of all the women-seers *Ghoṣā* made the largest contribution, two entire hymns of the tenth book (10. 39-40), each containing fourteen verses being assigned to her. She belonged to a family of great seers ; her grandfather was Dīrghatamas and her father Kakṣīvat, both of whom were composers of

several hymns in praise of the Aśvins. But high-born as she was, she could not find a husband because she had white leprosy, and grew old in the house of her father. It is said that invoked by her two hymns, the Aśvins, worshipped by her forefathers, cured her of the disease and made her worthy of wedded happiness. The next hymn (10. 41) is said to have been composed by her son Suhasta. Of the two hymns composed by Ghoṣā, the first refers to the various great deeds of the Aśvins in helping and curing the blind, the diseased and the feeble; the second is more personal and expresses Ghoṣā's more intimate feelings and desires. The hymn is too long to be fully translated here, but we give the verses in which there is a joyful anticipation of the bliss of married life :

The woman has been born; let him, desirous of maiden,  
approach her;  
For him let the spreading creepers grow along with rain;  
Let the streams flow for him as if down on an incline;  
For him who is not to be conquered, let there be the  
rights of a husband.

The men who weep for their wives, who give them a place  
in the sacrifice,  
Who hold them long locked in ardent embrace;  
Who beget the wished-for child for the sake of the Fathers,  
To such husbands the wives bring happiness by their  
embrace.

We know not that happiness of theirs; explain well to us  
How it is that young men tarry in the house of young girls;  
This is our desire, O Aśvins, that we repair  
To the house of the husband, who is devoted, strong and  
manly.

O Aśvins, rich in food, may your good will come down  
to us;

May you control the desire in our hearts;  
O Twin Associates, be our protectors and lords of welfare;  
May we, being loved, reach the house of the husband.  
On the house of my man, O Aśvins, bestow wealth  
And a son to me, who always sings your praise;  
Make the fords well watered, O lords of waters,  
Remove on the way all evil hindrance that stands.

*Other Women-Seers* : To the remaining six women-seers, not whole hymns but a few stanzas only are assigned. The first five and a half of the sixth verse of hymn 134 of the tenth book are said to have been composed by Māndhātṛ in praise of Indra; but the remaining half of the sixth and the seventh verse are ascribed to Godhā. There is, however, nothing remarkable in these verses except a eulogy of Indra and the Viśve-devas. Similarly, the anonymous wife of Vasukra is credited with the first stanza of a hymn (10. 28) in praise of Indra, while her husband is the seer of a part of this and the immediately preceding hymn (10. 27), the ascription going back to the time of the Rg-Vedic Āranyakas (*Aitareya*, 1. 2. 2; *Śāṅkhāyana* 1. 3). The sister of Agastya, whose name is not known, contributes a single stanza to a hymn (10. 60. 6), the rest of which is assigned to her sons, the Gaupāyanas. In this verse she makes a heroic call upon king Asamāti of the Ikṣvāku family to come to the aid of her sons who, as domestic priests, were dismissed by him, but one of whom was killed by the crafty priests appointed in their place (*Bṛhad-devatā*, 7. 84-102):

O king, yoke the red horses to your chariot for the nephews  
of Agastya;  
And overcome all the niggardly Paṇis who do not offer  
worship.

It is noteworthy in this connection that references are not wanting to warlike or sport-loving women in the *Rg-Veda*. We have a mention (1. 116. 15) of Viśpalā, who in Khela's (her husband's?) battle had a leg severed like the pinion of a wild bird; but the Aśvins as divine physicians replaced it with an iron limb. In another obscure hymn (10. 102), Mudgala is said to have won a fight (or a chariot-race?) with the aid of his wife Mudgalānī as the charioteer. But none of these women is the seer of any hymn.

Of a somewhat different kind are the few verses of which Lopāmudrā, Saſvatī and Romaſā are the reputed authors. They are remarkable for their plain-speaking in giving spontaneous expression to the innate urge of a wife for the embrace of her husband, of which she had been deprived. Agastya's wife Lopāmudrā is the seer of two stanzas in a hymn (1. 179. 1-2), 'dedicated to love', in which we have a strange dialogue on

this topic between the great ascetic and his wife. Tired of her husband's practice of austerity and continence, the wife who had served him long and faithfully feels herself neglected, and makes an impassioned appeal for his love and company :

For many long years in the past, both by day and by night,  
And in the mornings, have I wearied myself serving you ;  
Now decay impairs the beauty of my limbs ;  
What then ?—Let husbands approach their wives.

The ancient sages who attained truth,  
And talked of truth with the very gods,  
They did beget children, but did not break their penance ;  
Therefore, should the wives be approached by their  
husbands.

From the last stanza of the hymn it appears that Lopāmudrā's appeal did not go in vain ; and Agastya discharged the duties of both his domestic and ascetic life without neglecting the one for the other. In the same way, Saśvatī, who is called Nārī or woman *par excellence*, expresses her joy in a phallic verse (1. 179. 6) on finding her husband Āsaṅga, son of Playoga, recover his lost manhood. Romaśā, mentioned in the *Bṛhaddevatā* as the wife of king Bhāvya Svanaya, expresses in one verse (1. 126. 7) her youthful gladness on the attainment of puberty, and challenges her husband to feel her closely, since she is no longer immature but "covered with down like the ewe of the Gandhārins." It is remarkable that these frank and honest expressions of womanly passion have not been rejected, but have been given a place in the sacred text.

### *In the Upaniṣad*

*Maitreyī* : There is no trace of any woman-seers in the desert of desolate theological speculation of the extensive Brāhmaṇa literature. But coming to the Upaniṣads, we find at least two women of outstanding personality who could engage even the great Yājñavalkya in high philosophical discussion. The one was his wife Maitreyi, and the other his disputant Gārgī, daughter of the sage Vacaknu. Unfortunately we do not know much about them except what is given incidentally in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* ; but from the little we have it is clear that they were keen seekers after truth. The sage

Yājñavalkya, the greatest teacher of the age, is about to renounce the world, and wishes to make a settlement of his worldly goods between his two wives, Maitreyī and Kātyāyanī. On learning this Maitreyī says : "Sir, if this whole earth, full of wealth, be mine, should I be immortal by it ?" "No," replies Yājñavalkya, "like the life of rich people will be thy life ; but there is no hope of immortality by wealth." Then Maitreyī says : "What should I do with that which would not make me immortal ? Tell me, sir, of that alone which you know (of immortality)." Yājñavalkya, very pleased, replies : "You have been truly dear to me, and you speak dear words. Come, take your seat ; I will explain it to you. As I explain, meditate on it." Yājñavalkya, very pleased, replies : "You have been truly man as a means to immortality, which, fully recorded, forms the highest teaching of the Upaniṣad.

*Gārgī* : Gārgī appears to have been a more accomplished scholar, who questions Yājñavalkya at great length upon the origin of all existence, until the great sage, perturbed by her questionings, exclaims : "Ask not too much, Gārgī, so that thy head may not fall off thy body. Truly, concerning divinity one must not ask too much. Thou dost ask too much, Gārgī ; ask not too much." Thus silenced, she was, however, not subdued. Again in an assembly of sages, she seeks permission to ask two questions of the famous teacher, adding : "Should he answer those, none of you can ever beat him in describing the Brahman". She then advances towards Yājñavalkya fearlessly with the words : "I ask you. As a hero's son from Benares or from Videha strings the slackened bow and arises with two foe-piercing arrows in his hand, so I confront you with two questions. Answer me these". At the end of the highly philosophical dispute she acknowledges her defeat, and very generously declares to the assembled sages : "You should consider yourselves fortunate if you can get away from him with a salutation ; never shall any of you beat him in describing the Brahman."

## SOME COMMENTATORS ON THE MEGHADŪTA

The great popularity and currency of Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* is indicated not only by the existence of a large number of original manuscripts in the different libraries of India, Europe and America,<sup>1</sup> but also by the fact that more than fifty Sanskrit commentaries are known to exist, of which about a dozen of the more important ones are available in print.

### *Vallabhadeva*

The earliest known commentary is the *Pañjikā* of Vallabhadeva, which has been critically edited by E. Hultzsch (London 1911). Vallabha was a Kashmirian who described himself as the son of Rājānaka Ānandadeva, father of Chandrāditya and grandfather of Kavyaṭa; and he had the surname of Paramārthacihna. He is known to have commented upon several standard poetical works, including those of Kālidāsa (*Raghu*<sup>2</sup> and *Kumāra*<sup>3</sup>), Mayūra, Ratnākara and Māgha, as well as upon Rudraṭa's *Kāryālāmkāra*. As his grandson Kavyaṭa wrote a commentary on Ānandavardhana's *Devī-śataka* in 977-78 A.D. during the reign of Bhīmagupta of Kashmir (977-82 A.D.), Vallabhadeva's probable date would be the first quarter of the 10th century. Durgaprasad and Parab<sup>4</sup> suggest and Hultzsch accepts this date; but K. B. Pathak<sup>5</sup>, not on very cogent grounds, would bring it down to 1100 A.D. This commentator Vallabhadeva should be distinguished from the anthologist Vallabhadeva, also a Kashmirian, who compiled the *Subhāṣitāvali*, but who belonged probably to the middle of the 12th century.<sup>6</sup> Whatever might have been the exact date of our Vallabhadeva, there cannot be any doubt he is to us the earliest known commentator on the *Megha-dūta*; and his com-

<sup>1</sup> Much useful information about these MSS are derived from Dr. V. Raghavan from the materials of the New Catalogus Catalogorum.

<sup>2</sup> See footnotes of the Kāvyamāla ed. of *Vakroti-pañcāśikā* and of *Devī-śataka*.

<sup>3</sup> In the introd. to his ed. of the *Meghadūta*, Poona 1916 (2nd ed.).

<sup>4</sup> S. K. De in *JRAS*, 1927, pp. 471-72; A. B. Keith's objections in *BSOS* v, pt. i, p. 27f., and De's rejoinder in *ibid.* v, pt. iii, p. 499f.

mentary, therefore, deserves careful consideration from the point of view of textual study.

Hultzsch's edition of the commentary (as well as the text commented upon) is based on three Śāradā (-Kāśmīrī) and one Devanāgarī manuscript. He is right in holding that this last manuscript is highly conflated and in consequently basing his edition of the Kashmiri text of Vallabhadeva chiefly on his three Kashmiri manuscripts. It is interesting to note that Vallabha's text gives 112 stanzas; but one of these he himself believes to be imitative and spurious; hence 111 stanzas are given by him as genuine<sup>1</sup>. This point is highly important in view of the well known fact that the popular text of the *Megha-dūta* suffered a great deal from interpolation. Vallabhadeva rejects and excludes from his text as many as 19 such interpolated stanzas.

### Sthiradeva

The next important commentary is the *Bāla-prabodhini* of Sthiradeva, which has been edited (along with its text) from one manuscript existing in the Mandlik collection of the Fergusson College, Poona, by V. J. Paranjpe (Poona, 1936). Sthiradeva's date and provenance are not known. He is mentioned by name, along with Vallabhadeva and Āśāha (or Āśāda)<sup>2</sup>, by the presumably Jaina commentator Janārdana<sup>3</sup> and is found reproduced *in extenso* by the anonymous but presumably Jaina commentary *Sāroddhāriṇī* on the *Megha-dūta*. He might have been Jaina, but manuscripts of his commentary are found today in Poona (Mandlik collection), Baroda (Oriental Institute), Alwar, Tanjore (Sarasvati Mahal) and Mithila. There is little evidence to show that he is, as his editor presumes, earlier than Vallabhadeva; but since Janārdana's date<sup>4</sup> lies between 1192 and 1385 A.D. he appears to be a fairly old commentator.

Paranjpe's manuscript of the commentary is dated in Samvat 1521 (=ca. 1465 A.D.). There are two other manus-

<sup>1</sup> The Devanāgarī MS (no. 226/Or. 3352) of Vallabha's commentary in the British Museum gives 113 stanzas, slightly in excess of 112 given Hultzsch's edition.

<sup>2</sup> Āśāda, son of Kaṇka, wrote the *Viveka-maṇjari* in 1192 A.D. (P. K. Gode in *Calcutta Oriental Journal*, ii, pp. 199f). But nothing is known of this Jaina writer's comm. on the *Megha-dūta*.

<sup>3</sup> Peterson, *Three Reports*, p. 324.

<sup>4</sup> See below on Janārdana, and the *Sāroddhāriṇī*.

cripts in Baroda Oriental Institute (Acc. no. 1408 and 12266) which we have also examined. They designate the commentary simply as *Tīkā*. Both the manuscripts are incomplete,—the first beginning with comments on the stanza *kartum yac ca prabhavati mahīm*, the second with those on the stanza *haste līlā-kamalam*. The date of the first manuscript is illegible, but the second was written in Sarvat 1630 (=ca. 1574 A.D.). These much later versions of the commentary contain a large number of spurious stanzas, the first admitting 7 and the second 13. Contrary to this later conflated text tradition, however, Paranjpe's manuscripts presents the text as containing only 112 stanzas, of which one is declared spurious by the commentator himself. It, therefore, agree with the number 111 given as genuine by Vallabhadeva; and on his point its independent testimony is valuable.<sup>1</sup>

### SOUTH INDIAN COMMENTATORS

#### *Dakṣināvarta-nātha*

The commentary of *Dakṣināvarta-nātha*, entitled *Pradīpa*, was made available in print in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series<sup>2</sup> in 1919. He is referred to by Mallinātha (generally as Nātha; on *Raghu*<sup>3</sup> i. 7; *Megha*<sup>4</sup> 4, 65, 98) as a predecessor, as well as by Dīnakara<sup>5</sup> and Cāritravardhana.<sup>6</sup> As *Dakṣināvarta* quotes the authority of the lexicographer Keśava-svāmin<sup>7</sup> of the 12th A.D. and is himself quoted by Aruṇācala who is also cited by Mallinātha, he probably belonged to the 13th century.

Kshetresh Chattopadhyaya<sup>8</sup> rightly draws attention to some curious interpretations and capricious readings given by *Dakṣināvarta*; but in spite of these strange vagaries, some of which Mallinātha pointedly disputes, *Dakṣināvarta* appears to follow a tradition which omits, in agreement with Vallabhadeva and Sthiradeva, all the 19 spurious stanzas, and even the stanza

<sup>1</sup> The Tanjore MS (Sarasvati Mahal Library, no. 3885) is dated 1600 A.D., but curiously enough, the number of stanzas it gives appears to be only 106!

<sup>2</sup> Edited from two MSS.

<sup>3</sup> For Dīnakara Misra, see below.

<sup>4</sup> For Cāritravardhana, see below.

<sup>5</sup> Author of *Nāndṛthārṇava-saṅkṣepe* (ed. Trivandrum Skt. Ser. 1913). His date is given as end of the 12th and beginning of the 13th century.

<sup>6</sup> *Kuṇḍaliśāmi Sastri Comm.* Volume, pp. 17-23.

*gatyutkampād* in addition. He thus gives a total of 110 as against 111 genuine stanzas included by Vallabhadeva and Sahiradeva. He thus confirms generally and independently the position of the last two commentators in this respect.

### *Pūrṇa-sarasvatī*

The *Vidyullatā* of Pūrṇa-sarasvatī, pupil of Pūrṇa-jyotirmuni, was edited from two manuscripts and published by the Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam, in 1909. The date of this commentary is uncertain; but in the preface to the printed text we are informed, rather vaguely, that the commentator "seems to have lived some three centuries ago in the state of Cochin". Probably he flourished in the second half of the 14th or the first half of the 15th century A.D.<sup>1</sup>

This interesting commentary, like that of Dakṣināvartā, gives a total of only 110 stanzas, and excludes all the stanzas not included in the *Pradīpa*. In his interpretation, however, he is more or less independent.

Pūrṇa-sarasvatī was also the author of a drama in five acts called *Kamalinī-rājaharīsa* (ed. *Journal of Travancore Univ.*), a poem of 266 verses called *Rjulaghvī* or *Mālatī-mādhava-kathā* (ed. N. A. Gore, Poona 1943) and *Hamsa-saṁdeśa* in 102 Mandrākrāntā verses (ed. Trivandrum Skt. Series, 1937). He wrote also a commentary, called *Rasa-maṇjarī*, on the *Mālatī-mādhava* (ed. K. S. Mahadeva Sastri, Trivandrum Skt. Series 1953), and a *Tippaṇī* on the *Anargha-rāghava*.

### *Parameśvara*

Another scholiast from Cochin is Parameśvara, whose *Sumanorāmaṇī* commentary was edited from three manuscripts and published by the Travancore University Manuscripts Library from Trivandrum in 1946. He was son Rṣi and Gaurī of the Payyūr Bhaṭṭatiri family of Malabar, and flourished probably between 1400 and 1500 A.D.<sup>2</sup>, about the middle

<sup>1</sup> On the date Pūrṇa-sarasvatī see C. Kunhan Raja in *Poona Orientalist*, ix, pp. 142-48. On citations in his commentary see N. A. Gore in the same journal, pp. 133-41. Since he quotes Citsukha by name he should be later than the first half of the 14th century. On Pūrṇa-sarasvatī and his works, see K. Kunjunni Raja, *Contribution of Kerala to Sanskrit Lit.*, Madras 1958, pp. 213-16.

<sup>2</sup> On the identity and date of Parameśvara see Kunhan Raja in *Poona Orientalist*, ix, p. 148 and Introd. to the Trivandrum ed.; also K.

of the 15th century. The commentary exists in a shorter and a longer recension. It shows familiarity with the commentary of Pūrṇa-sarasvatī, and confirms the Malabar tradition mentioned above, which gives 110 stanzas as the total extent of the poem it comments upon.

*Sarasvatītīrtha (Narahari)*

The *Vidvajjanānurañjinī* commentary of Sarasvatītīrtha is not yet in print, but manuscripts of it exist in the libraries of the Bhandarkar Institute, Cambridge University and Asiatic Society of Bengal. This Sarasvatītīrtha appears to be identical with the Andhra scholiast Narahari Sarasvatītīrtha, who wrote a commentary on the *Kumāra*, as well as one on the *Kāvya-prakāśa*, entitled *Bāla-cittānurañjinī*. This last commentary gives us the information that he was born in Samvat 1298 (=ca. 1242 A.D.) in Tribhuvanagiri in the Andhra country. He traces his own genealogy from Rāmeśvara of Vatsagotra, and describes himself as the son of Mallinātha and Nāgammā and grandson of Narasiṁha, son of Rāmeśvara. When he became an ascetic, he took the name of Sarasvatītīrtha and composed his commentaries at Kāśī.<sup>1</sup> He also refers to two works, *Smṛti-darpana* and *Tarka-ratna* (with its *Dīpikā* commentary), written by himself. The colophon describes Sarasvatītīrtha as Paramahaṁsa Parivrājaka-cārya.

Sarasvatītīrtha's commentary on the *Megha-dūta* is indeed remarkable for its acuteness of exposition, which drew the encomium of K. B. Pathak; but since it admits 12 spurious stanzas (giving a total of 123 stanzas), its text-tradition cannot in this respect be taken as very reliable, nor do its readings always seem authentic. It appears to accept the conflated West Indian text, which differs from that of the Kashmirian and the Malabar commentators mentioned above.

*Mallinātha*

Kolācalā Mallinātha Sūri, author of the *Sañjivani* commentary, is well known as a commentator on the standard Kunjunni Raja in this work cited, p. 92f. On the two recensions of the commentary see *Kunjunni Raja Presentation Volume* and *Adyar Library Bulletin* for Feb. 1945.

<sup>1</sup> S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, i. p. 171.

Mahākāvyas of Kālidāsa, Bhāravi, Bhaṭṭi, Māgha and Śrīharṣa. He was also the author of the *Taralā* commentary on the *Ekāvalī* of Vidyādhara. He has been assigned to the latter part or end of the 14th century.<sup>1</sup>

Mallinātha's commentary on the *Megha-dūta* is deservedly popular for its learned yet lucid exposition; and in spite of its late date it has been often considered to be authoritative. But it cannot be said that it represents the best text-tradition of the *Megha-dūta*. It is true that it omits nine spurious stanzas and expressly declares the interpolated character (Prakṣiptā) of six more; but it admits at the same time four such verses. In the readings of passages also, it cannot be said that Mallinātha always gives us the most authentic forms. And yet, like Nilakanṭha's very late commentary on the *Mahābhārata*, the *Sañjīvī* has practically superseded by its reputation and currency most of the earlier commentaries on the poem. Nevertheless, the critical insight of Mallinātha, as against that of some West Indian Jaina commentators who accept a very much interpolated text, is shown by the fact that if we leave aside the stanzas omitted or declared spurious by himself, the total number of stanzas in his text<sup>2</sup> is not more than 115, which is not very much in excess of that of the Malabar commentators, on the one hand, and Vallabhadeva and Sthiradeva, on the other.

It seems, therefore, that the South Indian text-tradition was not uniform. The commentators of Malabar preserve, as against Sarasvatītūrtha and Mallinātha, a text comparatively free from conflation. It should be noted that most Telugu and Grantha manuscripts either include Mallinātha's commentary or generally follow his text.

Mallinātha's commentary has been printed much earlier and more often in India than any other; and for a time it practically standardised the text of Kālidāsa's poem. It was first printed (in lithograph) at Benares in 1849, then at Calcutta (Madanmohan Tarkalamkar) in 1850, at Madras (in

<sup>1</sup> On Mallinātha's date see S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics*, i. p. 228 and references cited therein; V. Raghavan in *NIA*, ii, pp. 442f.

<sup>2</sup> In this respect Mallinātha agrees more or less with the total number given by the Bengal commentators.

Telugu characters) in 1859, and at Bombay (Krishna Sastri Bhatavadekar) in 1866. In 1869 Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar brought out at Calcutta a careful edition of the text with Mallinātha's commentary in Devanāgarī characters. He utilised the Benares, Calcutta and Bombay editions, as well as a manuscript from the Calcutta Sanskrit College, and gave extracts from some Bengal commentaries.<sup>1</sup> His three source-texts and manuscripts contained respectively 121, 118, 125 and 116 stanzas; but even with such meagre and uncertain material, it is remarkable that he had the critical acumen to declare that only 110 stanzas were genuine. Other later and noteworthy editions of the text with Mallinātha's commentary are those of V. S. Islampurkar (Bombay 1889), which gives extracts from six commentaries; of G. R. Nandargikar (Bombay 1894), which is valuable for having utilised a large number of manuscripts of the text and commentaries; and of K. B. Pathak (Poona 1894), which gives Jinasena's text.

#### BENGAL COMMENTATORS

##### *Sanātana Gosvāmin*

Sanātana Gosvāmin was an older contemporary and disciple of Caitanya, the founder of Bengal Vaiśnavism. His commentary, entitled *Tātparya-dīpikā*, was edited from three manuscripts and published by J. B. Chaudhuri (Calcutta 1953-54).<sup>2</sup> Sanātana, son of Kumāra and brother of the equally famous Rūpa Gosvāmin, was originally a high official at the Muhammadan court of Gauḍa and lived near by at Rāmakeli where he met Caitanya for the first time in about 1513 A.D. Soon after this he renounced the world under the Samnyāsa name of Sanātana given by Caitanya, and became in subsequent years the centre (along with Rūpa and his nephew Jīva) of the arduous and prolonged theological and literary activity of the Bengal Vaiśnava sect at Vṛndāvana. The most flourishing period of

<sup>1</sup> He must have used them in manuscript, for they were not in print. Stenzler's edition (Breslau 1874) also notes readings from these Bengal commentaries.

<sup>2</sup> Published in the journal *Prācya-rdīpi*, ed. J. B. Chaudhuri, x-xi (1953-54). These editions do not note any variant readings. Two of the MSS are from the India Office (no. 3774/1381A and 3779/1570).

Śāṇātana's literary activity falls between 1533 and 1554 A.D., but it probably began as early as 1495 A.D. His commentary on *Megha-dūta*, which contains no Namaskriyā to Caitanya, was written probably in the latter part of the 15th century before he relinquished secular activity and began his theological labours at Vṛndāvana.<sup>1</sup>

The portion of this commentary on stanzas occurring in the *Uttara-megha* is extremely meagre, because the author, taking them to be easy (*sugamam*), did not take care to explain them. As a commentary it is lucid, but hardly distinguished. The total number of stanzas included in the text is 115.

### *Kalyāṇamalla*

The *Mālatī* commentary of Kalyāṇamalla is not yet printed, but it is available in the comparatively modern Colebrooke manuscript (no. 3774/1584; also no. 3777/529) existing in the Indian Office Library and its copy in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, on which H. H. Wilson's *editio princeps* (Calcutta 1813) of the *Megha-dūta* was based. Kalyāṇamalla, son of Gajamalla and grandson of Karpūra of Padmanābha family, appears to have been a local chief of Bhūriśreṣṭha, and is styled Rājarṣi in the colophon. Bhūriśreṣṭha, also mentioned by Kṛṣṇa-Miśra in his *Prabodha-candrodaya*, is now identified with the once flourishing Bhursut Perganna<sup>2</sup> in the district of Burdwan, Bengal. He was a patron of the well known scholar Bharata-mallika, who also commented on the *Megha-dūta*; but Kalyāṇamalla's work, perhaps written independently, has no agreement with that of his protégé. It is a briefer and much easier commentary meant perhaps for beginners. The total number of stanzas commented upon is 115.

### *Bharata-mallika*

The *Subodhā* commentary of Bharata-mallika on the *Megha-dūta* was edited by J. B. Chaudhuri from four manuscripts<sup>3</sup> and published at Calcutta in 1951. Bharata-mallika,

<sup>1</sup> See S. K. De, *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement*, Calcutta 1942, pp. 108f.

<sup>2</sup> It is associated with the famous Bengal poet, Bhārat Candra Rāy Guṇikar (1st half of the 18th century) as his native place.

<sup>3</sup> Three MSS from India Office and one from Calcutta Asiatic Society.

otherwise Bharata-Sena, son of Gaurāṅga-Mallika and descended from the family of Vaidya Harihara Khān, was a Bengali Vaidya or physician by caste, who was patronised by Kalyāṇamalla mentioned above. He was a voluminous scholiast, who composed commentaries also upon *Raghu*<sup>o</sup>, *Kumāra*<sup>o</sup>, *Kirāta*<sup>o</sup>, *Śiśu*<sup>o</sup>, *Ghaṭakarpara-kāvya* and *Bhāṭṭi*, and wrote extensively on grammar and lexicon. The number of his works listed in various catalogues of manuscripts or published is about 17.

The date of his commentary on the *Megha-dūta* is uncertain. Its editor would assign<sup>1</sup> it to 1675-76 A.D.; but we are inclined to agree with Colebrooke<sup>2</sup> and Rajendralal Mitra<sup>3</sup> that Bharata-mallika flourished in the middle of the 18th century A.D.

Even if this commentary of *Megha-dūta* is comparatively recent in date, it is remarkably full and erudite, though sometimes unnecessarily subtle and pedantic, and shows familiarity with the works of previous commentators. The number of stanzas<sup>4</sup> it comments upon is 114.

#### *Rāmanātha Tarkālambikāra*

Rāmanātha's commentary, entitled *Muklāvalī*, yet unprinted, is included in the Colebrooke manuscript of the India Office mentioned above (no. 3774/1584). Nothing is known about the author or his date, but he appears to have been a comparatively modern writer. There is nothing remarkable in his commentary, except his knowledge of rhetoric, lexicon and grammar; but his text gives a total of 116 stanzas.

<sup>1</sup> His argument is based chiefly on a Vaidyaka work called *Candra-prabhā*, ascribed to Bharata-mallika and bearing the date (apparently post-colophon) of Śaka 1597 (=1675 A.D.). The MS is said to have been written by the author himself. But the authenticity of this evidence is open to doubt. Such a work, called *Candra-prabhā*, is entered nowhere under the authorship of Bharata-mallika, except in an apocryphal print by a Calcutta Vaidya in 1892, on which alone the editor relies.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. *Asarakośa*, p. 6. Bharata-mallika wrote a *Mugdha-bodhini* commentary on this lexicon.

<sup>3</sup> In his *Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts* (vi, p. 145) Mitra writes in 1882 that Bharata-mallika "lived at Kanchrapara in the Hooghly district about 150 years ago." Haraprasad Sastri endorses this view and says that he had seen Bharata-mallika's grandson, Lokanatha-mallika (*Catalogue of A.S.B. Manuscripts* vi, 1931, p. 307).

<sup>4</sup> The Indian Office MS no. 3775/994b, however, contains 116 stanzas.

*Haragovinda Vācaspati*

Haragovinda, son of Vañkavihārin Gaigopādhyāya of Krishnanagar (Bengal), is also a modern commentator, perhaps of still later date. His hardly remarkable commentary is included in the Colebrooke Manuscript of the India Office mentioned above, and is not yet printed. Nothing is known of the author; but Keith would identify him with Haragovinda Vācaspati, author of *Jñāpakāvalī*, which belongs to the Samkṣipta-sāra school of grammar. The name of Haragovinda's commentary on the *Megha-dūta* does not appear in the India Office manuscript, but it is given as *Samgalā* in the manuscript which Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar used for his edition. The total number of stanzas it comments upon is 115.

*Kavirajna Cakravartin*

No information is available about this commentator. We could not obtain a copy of his *Artha-bodhīnī* commentary printed in Bengali characters (with a Bengali translation) at Calcutta in 1850; but we have seen the Calcutta Asiatic Society's manuscript of this commentary (no. 4956/10802) written in Bengali characters, as well as a Bengali manuscript of the same in the Dacca University library. There is nothing striking in this commentary, but its text has a total of 115 stanzas.<sup>1</sup>

It is noteworthy that the number of stanzas in the text commented upon by the Bengal commentators is between 114 and 116, usually 115.

## SOME OTHER EASTERN COMMENTATORS

*Śāśvata*

The only available manuscript of Śāśvata's commentary, entitled *Kavi-priyā*, exists in Asiatic Society's library at Calcutta (no. 4953/5646). It is fragmentary and is wanting in many folios. These fragments have been edited by J. B. Chaudhuri (Calcutta 1953), along with his edition of Sanātana's *Tātpary-*

<sup>1</sup> Nothing is known about Kavicandra's *Manorāmā* commentary on the *Megha*, a MS of which in Bengali characters is noticed by Rajendralal Mitra (*Notices*, ix, p. 251, no. 3174); nor of the *Tikā* of Ravikara (*ibid.*, x, p. 112, No. 3371) in Bengali characters, except that this Ravikara may be identical with Ravikara, son of Harihara and commentator on *Piṅgala* and *Vṛttaratnākara*.

*dīpikā*. The manuscript bears the date in Nevārī era 540 (=ca. 1330 A.D.). Śāsvata, therefore, must have been a fairly old writer; but the Nevārī script of the manuscript may be taken as going against the presumption, which is sometimes made, that Śāsvata belonged to Bengal. The second introductory verse of his commentary, quoted by Rajendralala Mitra<sup>1</sup> from a manuscript of the same in Devanāgarī characters, speaks of Vallabha's commentary as weighty and authoritative; and in many cases Śāsvata's readings do not agree with those of Bengal commentators. Even if Śāsvata's exact provenance is not known, it is probable that he belonged to some region in Eastern India. Śāsvata's text contained 115 stanzas.

### *Divākara Upādhyāya*

The commentary of Divākara, entitled *Tikā* or *Dyotikā*, noticed in the Mithila Catalogue, is available in the India Office manuscript no. 3780/1516. He was a protégé of some king of Mithila and wrote (according to Nandargikar) his commentary on *Raghu*<sup>2</sup> in 1385 A.D. He commented also upon *Kumāra*<sup>3</sup>. His text of *Megha-dūta* contains 125 stanzas.

### *Jagaddhara*

Another Maithili scholiast is Jagaddhara, who gives an account of himself and his family in his well known commentary on the *Mālatī-mādhava*. He traces his genealogy to one Caṇḍeśvara and informs us that he was son of Ratnadhara and Damayantī and grandson of Vidyādhara. His ancestors were Mīmāṁsakas, except perhaps his father who was a judicial functionary to some local chief. Jagaddhara's commentary on the *Megha-dūta* is entitled *Rasa-dīpikā*, as it is known from Rajendralal Mitra's *Notices* (v, p. 287, no. 1966) of a manuscript in Maithili characters; but no manuscript is known to be available now in any library. Jagaddhara commented also upon *Kumāra*<sup>4</sup>, as well as upon *Vāsavadattā*, *Veṇī-saṁhāra*, *Sarasvatī-kaṇṭhabharaya*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, etc. According to R. G. Bhandarkar, "Jagaddhara lived after the fourteenth century but how long after we have not the means of determining".<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Notices*, viii, p. 187, No. 2740.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to his ed. *Mālatī-mādhava*, which contains Jagaddhara's commentary on the drama, p. xxi.

*Bhagīratha Miśra*

The exact provenance of the *Tattva-dīpikā* commentary of Bhagīratha Miśra is not known. He is described as son of Harsadeva of the Pīṭamunḍi family and as having lived under Jagaccandra of Kūrmācala. But the only two known manuscripts of this commentary<sup>1</sup> are found in Bengal and written in Bengali characters. Bhagīratha commented also upon *Raghu*<sup>o</sup>, *Kirāta*<sup>o</sup>, *Śiśupāla*<sup>o</sup> and *Naigadha*. His text of the *Megha-dūta* contains 114 stanzas.

*Dinakara Miśra*

Of similarly unknown date and provenance is Dinakara Miśra, son of Dharmāngada and Kainalā. He wrote a *Tikā* on the *Megha-dūta*, of which a manuscript exists in Baroda Oriental Institute (no. 11364). His *Subodhini* commentary on the *Raghu-vānśa* is better known and is utilised by S. P. Pandit and G. R. Nandargikar. A manuscript of this (*Raghu*<sup>o</sup>) commentary in the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 444 of 1887-91) is dated in *sāvat* 1441 (= ca. 1885 A.D.). He commented also on the *Śiśupāla*<sup>o</sup>.

*Makaranda Miśra*

Makaranda Miśra, who is sometimes taken to be another Bengal commentator, probably lived like Śāśvata in a region adjoining Bengal. The only known manuscript of his commentary, entitled *Megha-saudāminī*, in Devanāgarī characters, exists in the library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta (no. 4955/1076). The total number of stanzas given by his text is 118, which is somewhat in excess of the usual number given by Bengal commentators.

*WEST INDIAN COMMENTATORS**Cārītravardhana*

Of the West Indian commentators, who are mostly Jaina writers, Cārītravardhana is perhaps the best known and earliest. He is to be distinguished<sup>2</sup> from Vidyādhara, son of Rāmacandra Bhiṣaj. He was a pupil of Kalyāṇarāja and belonged

<sup>1</sup> MS no. 221 in Rajendralal Mitra's *Notices*, i. p. 127, no. 222 and MS no. II. C 23 of the Sanskrit Sahitya Parisad, Calcutta.

<sup>2</sup> P. K. Gode, *Calcutta Orient. Journal*, iii, pp. 37-40.

to the Kharatara-gaccha. He wrote commentaries also on the *Raghu*<sup>o</sup> and *Kumāra*<sup>o</sup>, as well as on *Śiśupāla*<sup>o</sup>, *Naigadha* and *Rāghava-pāṇḍavīya*. His commentary on the *Megha-dūta* has been published in the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series (Benares 1931: reprinted 1953) under the descriptive name Cāritravardhana.

In the Calcutta Asiatic Society's manuscript of the commentary (no. 4954/10070), dated *sāvat* 1643 (= ca. 1587 A.D.), many folios are missing. The only recorded complete manuscript<sup>1</sup> appears to be the Bhandarkar Institute MS no. 345 of 1895-98. The name of the commentary does not appear in these manuscripts, but Cāritravardhana's commentaries on *Raghu*<sup>o</sup> and *Kumāra*<sup>o</sup> are both entitled *Śiśu-hitaśiṣṭi*. Cāritravardhana refers to Dakṣināvarta-nātha, but he does not accept the Malabar tradition of the text. G. R. Nandargikar would place him before Divākara Upādhyāya (see above) whose commentary on *Raghu*<sup>o</sup> is dated 1385 A.D. P. K. Gode<sup>2</sup> agrees with Nandargikar's dating, but sets the upper limit at 1172 A.D. A more precise dating is possible by the fact that Cāritravardhana wrote his commentary on the Jaina poem *Sinduraprabhara* in *sāvat* 1505 (= 1449 A.D.) and on *Naigadha* in *sāvat* 1541 (= 1455 A.D.).

The Jaina tradition of the text, embodied in this and the following commentaries, goes even further than that found in the adaptation of Jināsenā<sup>3</sup> who includes nine spurious stanzas, but excludes ten, giving a total number of 120. Cāritravardhana admits as many as eleven spurious stanzas, and omits only eight. Thus, the total number of stanzas in the printed text is 122; but the BORI MS gives 118. It would appear that whatever may be the intrinsic value, the Jaina commentaries followed a faulty text-tradition of a much interpolated text.

<sup>1</sup> The rarity of manuscripts of this commentary is mentioned in the preface to the Chowkhamba edition which, however, does not utilise the BORI MS, nor give variant readings and any account of its own manuscript material. Aufrecht (iii, 100) records only this MS.

<sup>2</sup> ABORI, xv, pp. 109-11.

<sup>3</sup> As in K. B. Pathak's ed. of the *Megha*<sup>o</sup>, Poona 2nd ed. 1916. Jināsenā's *Pārécākhyudaya* is edited independently by Yogiraj Panditacharya (Nirnay Sagar Press, Bombay 1909).

### *Janārdana*

Janārdana is described as a pupil of Ananta. A manuscript of his *Tīkā* on the *Megha-dūta* exists in the Baroda Oriental Institute Library (no. 2176). He also commented upon the *Raghu*<sup>o</sup> as well as on the *Vṛīta-ratnākara* and *Kāvya-prakāśa*. His full name is given Janārdana Vyāsa; and he may or may not have been a Jaina writer. He refers to three previous commentators by name, Vallabha, Asaha or Āsaha and Sthiradeva,—of whom Āsaha or Āṣada is the only writer known as a Jaina. P. K. Gode<sup>1</sup> approximates Janārdana's date between 1192 and 1385 A.D. His text contains 126 stanzas; and in this numbering he agrees with those of most Jaina commentators.

### *Kanakakīrti-gaṇī*

Kanakakīrti, pupil of Jayamandira, who was a pupil of Jinacandra Sūri, of Kharatara-gaccha, wrote an *Avacīrī* on the *Megha-dūta*. It appears to have been printed in lithograph from Benares in 1867. The British Museum manuscript of this commentary (no. 224/Or 21456) is found dated in 1462 A.D., but the Leipzig University manuscript (no. 416) contains no date. It is thus a fairly old work. The number of stanzas commented upon is 125 (as given by the Leipzig MS).

### *Lakṣmīnivāsa*

The *Śiṣya-hitaiśiṇī* commentary of Lakṣmīnivāsa, son of Śrīraṅga and pupil of Ratnaprabha Sūri of Bṛhad-gaccha, is another early Jaina commentary. The Bhandarkar Institute manuscript (no. 344 of 1895-98) of this commentary was written in *sāṁvat* 1713 (= ca. 1657 A.D.); but the Berlin manuscript (no. 1545) is dated earlier in *sāṁvat* 1514 (= ca. 1458 A.D.). It is a commentary of not much intrinsic value, and the total number of stanzas given by its text is 126 (Berlin MS 125).

### *Megharāja*

Megharāja-gaṇī or Megharāja-sādhu wrote the *Subodhikā* or *Sukha-bodhikā* commentary, a manuscript of which in the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 390 of 1884-87) is dated in *sāṁvat* 1460 (= ca. 1404 A.D.). P. K. Gode<sup>2</sup> would place this commentary between 1172 and 1404 A.D. The total number of stanzas it comments upon is 127.

<sup>o</sup> *Calcutta Oriental Journal*, ii, p. 188f.

<sup>1</sup> *Poona Orientalist*, i, no. 3, p. 50.

*Mahimasinha-gani*

The commentary of *Mahimasinha-gani*, pupil of *Sivamidhāna* of *Kharatara-gaccha*, is also called *Sukha-bodhikā*. It was composed, as the colophon of one of its manuscripts in the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 389 of 1884-87) states, in *sahvat* 1693 (= ca. 1637 A.D.). It is a fairly late commentary and is in no way very remarkable. The number of stanzas in its text is 126.

*Samayasundara-gani*

Contemporaneous with *Mahimasinha* was *Samayasundara-gani*, pupil of *Sakalacandra*, who was a pupil of *Jinacandra*. His commentary on the *Megha-dūta* is simply called *Tikā*. He wrote commentaries also on the *Raghu*° (*Arthālāpanikā*) and *Vṛtta-ratnākara* (Sugamā). His *Vāgbhaṭālāmukhā-vṛtti* was composed in Ahmedabad for one *Harirāma* in 1636 A.D. The only manuscript of his commentary on the *Megha-dūta* exists in the Panjab University Library (no. 4513, *Catalogue*, ii, p. 262). Unfortunately the manuscript was not accessible to us.

*Sumativijaya*

*Sumativijaya*, pupil of *Vinayameru*, wrote about the same time his *Sugamāntvayā* commentary, two manuscripts of which exist in the Bhandarkar Institute.<sup>1</sup> P. K. Gode<sup>2</sup> would place *Sumativijaya* in the latter half of the 17th century, while K. B. Pathak (*op. cit.*, p. xxi) states that *Sumativijaya* wrote his commentary at about *sahvat* 1690 (= ca. 1634 A.D.). *Sumativijaya* composed a commentary also on the *Raghu*°, which was completed at *Vikramapura*. The merit of his *Sugamāntvayā* as commentary is not much; but like *Janārdana*, *Lakṣmīnivāsa* and *Mahimasinha*, he comments on a text of 126 stanzas.

*Vijaya-sūri*

*Vijaya-gani* or *sūri*'s *Tikā* (also called *Sukha-bodhikā*) was composed in *sahvat* 1709 (= ca. 1633 A.D.), as stated in its manuscript in the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 443 of 1887-91). *Vijaya-sūri* is said to have been pupil of *Rāmavijaya-gani* of *Tapāgaccha*. He wrote commentaries also upon the *Raghu*° and *Kumāra*° (both called *Subodhikā*). *Vijaya-sūri*'s text of the *Megha-dūta* like that of *Megharāja*, contains 127 stanzas.

<sup>1</sup> No. 549 of 1891-95 and No. 351 of A. 1882-83.

<sup>2</sup> *ABORI*, xiii, p. 341-43.

*Kṣemahaihsa-gaṇī*

Kṣemahaihsa-gaṇī, pupil of Jinabhadra Śūri of Kharatara-gaccha, wrote a *Tīka* on the *Megha-dūta*, the date of which is not given by either of its two manuscripts in the Bhandarkar Institute (nos. 329 of 1884-86 and 346 of 1895-96). He wrote commentaries also on the *Vāgbhaṭālaṁkāra* and *Vṛtta-ratnākara*. His text contains 123 stanzas.

*The Sāroddhāriṇī*

This is probably a Jaina commentary, but in its only available manuscript, belonging to the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 157 of 1882-83), the name of the author is missing. The manuscript is dated *sāvat* 1617 (=ca. 1561). P. K. Gode<sup>1</sup> would place this work widely between 1173 and 1561 A.D. K. B. Pathak, however, thinks that this commentary knows that of Mallinātha; if that be so, then the date may be put between 1420 and 1561. In Pathak's opinion this work is "next only to Mallinātha's work in point of merit", but its importance need not on that account be exaggerated from the point of view of the textual study of the poem; for in common with most Jaina commentators it accepts a much interpolated text, which gives a total number of 125 stanzas.

*The Megha-latā*

This is also a Jaina commentary of unknown date and authorship, which was noticed by Rajendralal Mītra (ix, p. 163, no. 3076) and of which a manuscript exists in the Bhandarkar Institute (no. 160 of 1882-83). It is of the usual *Avacūri* type, and its text gives 126 stanzas.

It will be seen from this brief review that from the time of Jinasena (first quarter of the ninth century) the Jaina tradition, represented by these commentaries, incorporates so many spurious stanzas that their total number fluctuates between 125 and 127, much further than 120 of Jinasena. This is a much more conflated text than those given by Vallabhadeva and Sthiradeva, by the Malabar commentators, by the Bengal and East Indian scholiasts, or by the Tibetan translation and the Sinhalese paraphrase.

<sup>1</sup> *ABORI*, xiv, pp. 130-31.

It is important, in the case of the *Megha-dūta*, to take into account the text given by different groups of commentators. It appears from an examination of manuscripts that the commentaries had already so fixed the different text-traditions that they found themselves reflected in the independent manuscripts of different groups or regions. This peculiar circumstance of text-transmission makes it clear that, not so much existing manuscripts (which are mostly later in date) as the commentaries should be taken as our chief guide for textual study. Only if some old manuscript, anterior in date to the commentaries, should be found, it might furnish textual evidence unaffected by their influence.<sup>2</sup>

It is not possible within the limits of this article to discuss the comparative authenticity of readings given by different groups of commentaries; but we can briefly indicate here the comparative extent of the original text given by them. The shortest text, consisting of 110 stanzas, is given by the Malabar commentators, Daksināvarta-nātha, Pūrṇa-sarasvatī and Parameśvara. The Kashmirian Vallabhadeva and Sthiradeva of unknown provenance give a text of 111 stanzas. Among other South Indian commentators, Mallinātha gives 115 and Sarasvatī-tīrtha 123 stanzas. Among Eastern commentators generally and Bengal commentators in particular, Sanātana Gosvāmin, Śālvata, Kalyāṇamalla, Kaviratna Cakravartin and Haragovinda Vācaspati each gives 115 stanzas; Rāmanātha Tarkālankāra 116; Makaranda Miśra 118; but Bhagiratha Miśra and Bharatamallika 114 each. The Maithili commentator Divikara Upādhyāya, however, stands apart and gives 125 stanzas. It should be noted in this connection that the Tibetan translation<sup>3</sup> gives 117 and the Sinhalese paraphrase<sup>4</sup> 118 stanzas. The longest and most interpolated text is given by the Jaina commentators, thus: Vijaya-sūri and Megharāja, each 127 stanzas; Janārdana, Lakṣmīnivāsa, Sumativijaya, Mahimasintha, the

<sup>1</sup> This question has been discussed in detail in the Introduction to our Sāhitya Akademi edition of the *Megha-dūta*, which contains a select Bibliography. In the constitution of the text we have made use of most of these commentaries and noted readings from them, as well as from the Tibetan translation and Sinhalese paraphrase.

<sup>2</sup> Die tibetische Uebersetzung von Kālidāsa's *Megha-dūta*, Berlin 1907. (Date about 13th century).

<sup>3</sup> Ed. T. B. Pānsbokke, Colombo 1893. (Date unknown).

*Megha-lalā*, each 126; Kanakakirti, as well as the two Jaina adaptations *Nemidūta* and *Śiladūta*, and the *Sāroddhāriṇī*, each 125; Kṣemaharīsa 123; Cāritravardhana 122; and the adaptation of Jinasena 120. From these facts it is clear that, in spite of diversity, there is a general agreement, in the matter of extent, between the text of the Malabar commentators, on the one hand, and that of Kashmirian Vallabhadeva, as well as Sthiradeva, on the other. As there is no *prima facie* possibility of mutual contamination, we can take this agreement as original and not secondary; and it is probable that Kālidāsa's text originally contained not more than 110 or 111 stanzas. This number was increased by a process of accretion, through the centuries, differently in different regions, so that some inferior manuscripts are found to contain the maximum of 130 stanzas.

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## ON THE TEXT OF THE MAHĀVIRA-CARITA

Since J. Hertel published, in January 1924, his striking monograph on the textual problems connected with the *Mahāvīra-carita*, much material on the subject has been made accessible by Todar Mall's more recent edition of the drama published by the University of the Panjab.<sup>1</sup> It will not, therefore, be out of place to reopen the question and consider it in the light of the fresh data supplied by this new edition of the text.

Hertel very pertinently remarked that we did not possess any truly critical edition of the *Mahāvīra-carita*, and that no edition gave even the scantiest critical material for settling the text. This reproach has now been happily removed by Todar Mall's edition, which is based upon ample manuscript material (18 Northern and Southern MSS), and which gives very full critical apparatus.

The *editio princeps* of F. H. Trithen, published in London in 1848, was based on only three MSS, belonging to the India Office and the Bodleian, which have also been used by Todar Mall and marked by him as I<sub>1</sub>, I<sub>2</sub>, and W, respectively.<sup>2</sup> The first of these MSS is fairly old, being dated in *sāvat* 1665=1609 A.D.; but the other two are comparatively modern, one being dated in *sāvat* 1857=1801 A.D., and the other conjectured to have been copied for Wilson about 1820 A.D.<sup>3</sup> Trithen's edition, however, gives no variant readings, nor any account of the MSS, but it admits collation of doubtful

<sup>1</sup> Entitled "A Note on Bhavabhūti and Vākpatirāja" in *Asia Major* I, I, pp. 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> Edited with critical apparatus, Introduction and notes by the late Todar Mall, Government of India Sanskrit Scholar at Oxford. Revised and prepared for the Press by A. A. Macdonell. Panjab University Oriental Publications, Oxford University Press 1928. It is remarkable that although this edition is published in a revised form in 1928, no reference is made to Hertel's important article referred to above.

<sup>3</sup> I<sub>1</sub>=India Office no. 114c-4136 (Eggeling's Catalogue, pt. vii, p. 1581); I<sub>2</sub>=India Office no. 943-4135 (Eggeling, *loc. cit.*); W=Bodleian MS no. 260 (Wilson MS 229b) noticed in Aufrecht's *Bodleian Catalogue*, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> No date is given in the MS itself, but see Todar Mall, p. xiv, and Hertel, p. 3.

passages with their reproductions in Alāmkāra literature. The next Calcutta edition of Tāraṇātha Tarkavācaspati with his occasional but very scanty glosses, published in 1857, was reprinted (without mention of the fact) by his son, and is thus substantially the same as the Calcutta edition of Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgara, published in 1873. Tāraṇātha appears to have used Trithen's edition, which he refers to in his Bengali preface as "the text printed in England," but he also consulted a MS of the drama which existed in the Calcutta Sanskrit College Library and which is presumably the same as the manuscript Sc of Todar Mall, complete in seven Acts.<sup>1</sup> Nothing, however, is said about the extent and character of the MS used, nor are any variant readings noted. Anundaram Borooah's edition, published in Calcutta in 1877 with a Sanskrit commentary of his own, is based on no independent MS material, but is prepared chiefly with the help of the editions of Trithen and Tāraṇātha, as well as with the aid of readings of quoted passages in Alāmkāra works; but this edition makes the first attempt at a systematic and running interpretation of the text in its Sanskrit commentary.<sup>2</sup> The text in all these editions is frankly eclectic, but it follows one and the same recension which was presumably universally accepted in Northern India.<sup>3</sup> It may for practical purposes be taken as being represented by Trithen's *editio princeps*. Of later editions published in Bombay, Poona and elsewhere, the most noteworthy is that printed by the Nirnay Sagar Press, Bombay, and edited with Virarāghava's commentary by T. R. Ratnam Aiyar of Trichinopoly and S. Rangachariar of Srirangam. It gives no description of manuscript material utilised, nor does it notice any variant readings, except what is casually mentioned in Virarāghava's commentary itself. It is presumably based on Southern MSS, as its text agrees with the Mysore manuscript Mr of Todar Mall. This

<sup>1</sup> No. 481-242 in the *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS in the Library of the Calcutta Sanskrit College*, pt. vi, p. 145. It is a modern copy made near Calcutta for one 'Phila-sāhaba' and dated *samskrat* 1879=1823 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> Tāraṇātha remarks in his Bengali preface that many passages of the text are obscure to him and he has not ventured to write glosses on them.

<sup>3</sup> The Poona editions, both of which were published in 1887, one by S. G. Jyotishi and the other by Śridhara Śāstrī with his own commentary, also follow this recension. There is also a Madras edition with the modern commentary of Lakṣmaṇa Śūri (New ed. 1904); but we have not seen it.

edition is important, not only because it gives the text of Virarāghava, but also because it presents for a portion of the text an entirely different recension, which has its origin probably in Southern India. Todar Mall's edition, however, brings to light a third recension, which is probably North Indian or rather Kashmirian, but which was hitherto unknown.

Todar Mall has given a fairly full account of the MSS used by him, and it is not necessary to recapitulate it here. But it would be convenient to summarise at the outset the main differences between the three recensions mentioned above. Todar Mall divides his eighteen manuscripts into two groups: Northern (11 MS.) and Southern (7 MS.); but three different recensions for a portion of the text are distinguishable in them. All the eighteen Northern and Southern MSS of Todar Mall, as well as all the printed editions of the drama, agree in giving the same text from Act I to the end of Act V. 46, the divergences being nothing more than the inevitable differences of reading of particular words or passages. Here also Todar Mall's Cambridge manuscript Cu (Northern), as well as his Southern manuscripts Mt, Mg, T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub> end.<sup>1</sup> Material divergences, however, begin from this point, and for the rest of the text we mark three distinct recensions: (1) From Act V. 46, to the end of Act VII (*i.e.*, to the end of the drama), the editions of Trithen, Tārānātha, Jīvānanda, Borooh and Śrīdhara, as well as Todar Mall's eight Northern manuscripts (I<sub>1</sub>, I<sub>2</sub>, W, E, Sc, Md, Alw and Bo),<sup>2</sup> give what has been called by Todar Mall Recension A and by Hertel the vulgata recension, this being the universally accepted text, or as Ratnam Aiyar puts it,<sup>3</sup> *svavatra pracalitah, pāthah*. (2) But Ratnam Aiyar's edi-

<sup>1</sup> Mt and Mg appear to be nos. 12583 and 12585 mentioned in the *Descriptive Catalogue of Sank. MSS. in the Govt. Oriental MSS. Library, Madras*, vol. xxi, pp. 8451, 8453. But there are three other MSS, probably more recent acquisitions, in the same Library, which have not been collated by Todar Mall, but which are described in the above Catalogue. These are: (1) no. 12584 (p. 8452), going up to the end of Act V, (2) no. 12586 (p. 8453), with Virarāghava's commentary, containing Acts I-VII complete and (3) no. 12587 (p. 8455) which breaks off in Act IV.

<sup>2</sup> Of the remaining three Northern MSS of Todar Mall, his Cambridge University manuscript Cu ends with V. 46; India Office MSS I, ends with Act V; Bengal Asiatic Society manuscript B follows Recension C.

<sup>3</sup> This text is given by him as an appendix to this edition.

tion, as well as Todar Mall's single Mysore manuscript Mr. gives a different text for this portion of the drama (*i.e.*, from Act V. 46, to the end of Act VII), and this recension, marked by Todar Mall as Recension C<sup>1</sup>, is expressly attributed to one poet Subrahmanyā. At the end of Act VII the manuscript Mr. reads (Todar Mall, p. 306): *asmin nātakे vāli-prakarayे* 'daurātmyād ēribhīḥ' (V. 46) *iti śloka-paryantena grantha-saṁdarbhena Bhavabhbūtīnā tri-bhāga-parimitā kathā viracitāl tataḥ 'avaśyam ca śreyasvinā mayā bhavitavyam'* (prose-passage preceding V. 47, in this recension) *iti vāli-vākyād ārabhya bharata-vākyā-paryantena grantha-saṁdarbhena Subrahmanyā-havinā kṛtsno'pi kathā-śeṣā pūritāḥ/asya pollaruvaṁśa-jaladhi-candrasya Veṅkaṭeśārya-tanūbhavasya Veṅkṭāmbā-garbha-saṁbhavasya drāgevādvaitālma-jñānasidhīr astu/*. Ratnam Aiyar's footnote repeats (3rd. ed., 1910, p. 224) these words up to the end of *kathā-śeṣā pūritāḥ*, but omits the rest, probably basing the footnote on a similar colophon in the MS utilised for that edition. These two Recensions A and C, *i.e.*, the vulgata and Subrahmanyā's text, therefore, stand in sharp contrast to each other with regard to the portion of the text between Act V. 46 to the end of Act VII. (3) But the third recension disclosed by Todar Mall's Kashmir and Bengal manuscripts K and B<sup>2</sup> is somewhat peculiar. It is distinguished by reading a different text only from Act V. 46, to the end of that Act; for the rest of the text, *i.e.*, for Acts VI and VII, it agrees with the vulgata or Recension A. After giving the full text of V. 46, the manuscript K notes: *etāvad Bhavabhbūtēḥ, agre kavi-nāyaka-Vināyaka-bhāṭṭair apūri*. From this point it adds a different text up to the end of Act V, and also for the last few syllables of the third foot and the whole of the fourth foot of V. 46.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This recension is given in Appendix B, p. 286f.

<sup>2</sup> This agreement between Kashmir and Bengal manuscripts is notable—but Todar Mall's Calcutta Sanskrit College manuscript Sc follows the vulgata or Recension A. The manuscript B belongs to the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

<sup>3</sup> The reading of B is not clear from Todar Mall's description. At p. viii of the Introduction, we are told that "B is very fragmentary, covering as it does a little over two Acts"; and from p. xi it appears that it comprised Acts VI and VII, although we are not told what else it included. From the *varia lectio* noted in the text it seems that the MS begins with the 4th pāda of V. 59 of Recension C (see p. 282) and ends with Act VII, following Recension C throughout.

From what has been said above the following facts will be clear:—

(1) With regard to the text from Act I to the end of Act V. 46, there is agreement in all MSS and editions of the drama.

(2) With regard to the text from Act V. 46 to the end of Act VII we have (a) the vulgata or the Recension A, (b) the text of Subrahmanya and (c) the text of Vināyaka, which agrees partially with the vulgata in Acts VI and VII, but differs from the vulgata as well as from Subrahmanya's text in the portion from Act V. 46 to the end of that Act.

Now with regard to the text from Act I to the end of Act V. 46, there is not only universal agreement but we have also the fact that one Northern (Cu) and four Southern manuscripts (Mt, Mg, T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>) end at this point. It is also important to note that both Subrahmanya and Vināyaka undertake independently to supplement the text only after V. 46. There is the distinct evidence of Virarāghava who says: <sup>1</sup> *etāvāt eva Bhavabhūteḥ sūktih/ itah param tu Subrahmanya-nāmnah kasyacit kaver vaca iti mūla eva<sup>2</sup> sphuṭibhavisyati/ 'avāyāś ca' ityādi* (the prose passage immediately following V. 46) *Subrahmanya-kaver vacāṁsy api prāyaso vyākhyāsyante/*. This can only mean that the genuine text of Bhavabhūti was available to Virarāghava only up to the end of V. 46, and that he was apparently of opinion that this was the extent to which Bhavabhūti's text was composed, the remainder being a supplement written in later times by one (*kasyacit*) Subrahmanya-kavi. That this supplement came into existence some considerable time before Virarāghava is apparent from the fact that Virarāghava knew hardly anything of this "certain" Subrahmanya, but also from the indication given in his commentary that he must have used more than one MS of Subrahmanya's text, of which he notices several variant readings. On the other hand, the manuscript K also indicates that the genuine work of Bhavabhūti extended up to the end of V. 46 (*etāvad Bhavabhūteḥ*) and that another supplement was composed by one Vināyaka Bhaṭṭa. From this,

<sup>1</sup> This passage is given in the footnote to the commentary on V. 46 (p. 193) in Ratnam Aiyar's edition, with [iti] Virarāghavaḥ.

<sup>2</sup> This reference to a later passage of the text can only mean (as Hertel interprets it) the colophon of one or all of Virarāghava's own MSS of the text.

either of two conclusions is possible : (1) that the genuine text of Bhavabhūti was available to the scribes and commentators up to the end of V. 46 and, as we have two independent supplements composed respectively in Northern and Southern India only after this point, the rest of the work was lost, or (2) that Bhavabhūti wrote the work only up to the end of V. 46, and for some reason or other left the drama incomplete. We have no data to establish definitely the correctness of either of these conclusions. At the same time it is clear that the text up to the end of V. 46, is undoubtedly the work of Bhavabhūti himself. The rest was either lost or never written by the dramatist, and attempts were made in later times to supplement it (a phenomenon which is not unusual in Sanskrit literature) by (1) the anonymous vulgata text, (2) by Vināyaka Bhaṭṭa and (3) by Subrahmanyā.

It is difficult to identify Vināyaka Bhaṭṭa. Of all the Vināyakas mentioned by Aufrecht, one Vināyaka Pañjita is quoted in *Sāṅgadharapaddhati* (no. 1254), while another Vināyaka is mentioned as the author of a metrical Pūrvapūjikā to *Dalakumāra-carita*. It is possible, however, to identify Subrahmanyā from the details given about him by the Mysore MS, which tells us that he was the son of Veṅkaṭeśa and Veṅkaṭāmbā and that he belonged to the Pollaru family. It appears that he wrote a commentary on the *Probodha-candrodaya*, called *Praudha-prakāśa*,<sup>1</sup> as well as a commentary entitled *Dharma-pradīpikā* on a treatise on Aśauca, called *Abhinava-śādāśīti*.<sup>2</sup> In the opening verses of both these works the same parentage is given, but the name of the family is mentioned as Pōndūri.

With regard to Subrahmanyā's supplement, or Recension C, which extends from Act V. 46, to the end of Act VII, no question arises, as it is homogeneous and distinctly attributed to a particular author. But the vulgata (or Recension A) and Vināyaka's text (Recension B) have a large portion of the supplementary text in common, viz., the whole of the text of Acts

<sup>1</sup> Noticed with extracts in *Descriptive Catalogue of Sansk. MSS. in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscript Library*, vol. xxi, no. 12560, p. 8429.

<sup>2</sup> Noticed in the same Catalogue, vol. v, no. 3011, p. 2240.

VI and VII which is the same in both recensions. That this portion is spurious admits of no doubt, and both Hertel and Todar Mall have brought forward enough evidence to prove it.<sup>1</sup> But how is it that both Recensions A and B have this portion in common, although they differ in giving two entirely divergent texts for the portion covered by the text from Act V. 46 to the end of Act V?

Todar Mall has advanced (pp. viii, xviii-xix) a somewhat extraordinary theory that Bhavabhūti's original work must have come to a sudden close with Act V. 46, but that later on the dramatist revised this portion and brought the Act to a close. He maintains that the vulgata text or Recension A from Act V. 46 to the end of that Act represents this authentic added text of Bhavabhūti. The incomplete unrevised text up to the end of Act V. 46 is preserved in the MSS of the Southern group; the revised completed text up to the end of Act V travelled to the North where it appears in the MSS of the Northern group.

About the alleged revision of the original text the evidence does not seem to be very convincing. The fact that in some MSS better readings are found proves nothing, especially in the case of an author like Bhavabhūti who is perhaps less careful in phrasing than most poets and naturally tempted later emendations. Again, Todar Mall himself admits (p. ix) that the readings of the Southern MSS are at places decidedly superior to those of the Northern. This strikes at the very root of his hypothesis of revision, although Todar Mall attempts to explain this anomaly away by supposing that these occasional superior readings were inevitable in the South, which is assumed to have been the home of Sanskrit culture where Bhavabhūti's works were more frequently studied. Of this supposition no convincing evidence is produced.

For his hypothesis that the portion from Act V. 46 to the end of that Act in the vulgata or Recension A represents the authentic text of Bhavabhūti, the following arguments are put forward. It is necessary to consider them in detail:

(1) Todar Mall writes: "The oldest known MS I, which is dated *satiyat* 1665 (=1609 A.D.) runs without a break beyond V. 46, and does not mention that the portion of the Act after

<sup>1</sup> See Todar Mall, p. xix; Hertel, p. 8.

V. 46, is from the pen of a different author. Neither do the other MSS belonging to Recension A come to a sudden stop in the middle of the Act. On the other hand, the MSS of the other two recensions attribute the part proceeding V. 46 and that following V. 46, to the end of Act V in *clear words* to different authors.<sup>1</sup>

There are several inaccuracies in this argument. In the first place, the Cambridge University Manuscript Cu, an equally old Northern MS supposed to be "a little over 300 years old," extends only up to V. 46, and its evidence cannot be lightly set aside. In the second place, if the MSS of Recension A, which give the text without a break, do not mention (as the MSS of other recensions do) that the portion after V. 46 is from the pen of a different author, they also do not mention that Acts VI and VII are spurious. Applying the same argument, we shall have to consider these Acts also as the authentic text of *Bhavabhūti*. It is difficult indeed to conclude anything definite from the fact that some MSS of Recension A stop without a break at the end of Act V, for other MSS of the same recension carry on the text without break to the end of Act VII. On the other hand, the evidence of the other two Recensions B and C is not in favour of the genuineness of anything beyond V. 46. The Kashmirian manuscript K, which is dated in *sāṁvat* 1674 (=1618 A.D.), and which is therefore nearly as old as Todar Mall's I, considers only the portion ending with V. 46 as genuine, and regards *the whole of the remaining text* (i.e., even including VI and VII) as the supplementary work of *Vināyaka*. Four<sup>1</sup> Southern MSS also either (1) stop abruptly at V. 46, or (2) as in the case of the Mysore MS or *Virarāghava*'s text (Recension C) regard *the whole of the remaining text* (i.e., from V. 46, to the end of the drama) as the work of *Subrahmanya*. It is clear that both *Vināyaka* and *Subrahmanya* undertook to write a supplement of the work, each in his way, after V. 46, and not after the end

<sup>1</sup> *Ez.* Mt, Mg. T<sub>1</sub>, and T<sub>2</sub>. Only Madras Oriental Library MS no. 12584 and 12586 (see above footnote 8) end with Act V, but there is nothing to show that they belong to the Southern group. The Tanjore MSS T<sub>3</sub> and T<sub>4</sub> are obviously fragmentary, the former breaking off in Act V, the latter containing only three Acts.

of Act V. If Bhavabhūti's own text has been preserved in Recension A up to the end of Act V (as both Hertel and Todar Mall argue), then we are driven to the rather unwarranted conclusion that not only Subrahmanya but also Vināyaka took the unusual liberty of altering even the genuine text after V. 46 to the end of Act V. The very fact that both these authors were independently in agreement in completing the text only after V. 46, would make us pause before we seriously maintain that the Recension A preserves Bhavabhūti's genuine text up to the end of Act V.

(2) Todar Mall's second argument is more important. He points out that *Mahāvīra-carita* V. 49 in Recension A is cited (with the words *yathā Vīra-carite* or *yathā Mahāvīra-carite*) in the *Avaloka* commentary on *Dadarūpaka* II. 50 (ed. Hall) and in *Sāhitya-darpana* (on VI. 30, ed. Durgāprasad, 1915, p. 309), and infers from this that "evidently the authors of these old works on Alankāra considered the text of Recension A [i.e., from V. 46 to the end of that Act] as the genuine text of Bhavabhūti." In considering this argument, it must be noted that the *Sāhitya-darpana* cannot be taken as an old work on Alankāra and that the context shews that it merely borrows or copies this illustrative quotation from *Dadarūpaka* in connexion with the discussion of *sāttvati vṛtti* in the heroic and its four divisions. The citation in the *Dadarūpaka*, which alone we need therefore consider here, cannot however be so lightly brushed aside. But this single<sup>1</sup> citation by itself cannot, in our opinion, be taken as having a conclusive force. It only shows that Dhanika, author of the *Avaloka* commentary, regarded this verse as a part of the genuine text, and nothing more. It only indicates that in Dhanika's time, as in later times, the whole of the vulgata text<sup>2</sup> came to be generally accepted as genuine in the North (as *sarvatra pracalitah paṭhah*) and we need not, therefore, be surprised that he did not regard it as spurious.

(3) Todar Mall's third argument that this portion of

<sup>1</sup> The citation of *Mahāvīra-carita* V. 51 in *Sarvatī-kṛṣṇābhāraṇa* (ed. Borooah, p. 351) is anonymous and proves nothing.

<sup>2</sup> And not necessarily up to the end of Act V, for the absence of any quotations from Acts VI and VII proves nothing.

Recension A (*i.e.*, from V. 46, to the end of that Act) contains a couple of passages which appear to be repeated in the other dramas of the author, does not bear close scrutiny; for these slight repetitions of phrases (as in two cases in Act VI noted by Todar Mall himself) can be easily accounted for by the likely supposition that the unknown writer of the vulgata supplement wanted to imitate Bhavabhūti and probably appropriated these phrases from the latter.

(4) Todar Mall's fourth argument that Recension B runs to an unusual length and covers 75 verses (as against 16 of Recension A) need not be seriously considered; for this recension is distinctly ascribed to a different author, and the question therefore does not arise.

We are now in a position to conclude with great probability that (1) the text from Act I to the end of Act V. 46 forms the only authentic text of Bhavabhūti, and (2) that the vulgata or Recension A of the rest of the drama (and not merely of Acts VI and VII) is as spurious as Recensions B and C, which are expressly attributed to Vināyaka and Subrahmanya respectively.

But one question still remains unsolved. We have already noted that Acts VI and VII have identical texts in both A and B recensions. Only the text from Act V. 46 to the end of Act V differ entirely in these two recensions, A giving a shorter and B a longer text for this portion. But Todar Mall's Kashmirian manuscript K, which presents Recension B and which is a fairly old MS dated in 1618 A.D., reads after V. 46 : *etāvad Bhavabhūteḥ/agre havi-nāyaka-Vināyaka-bhaṭṭair apūri*. Now as this MS (as well as B which gives also Recension B) includes Acts VI and VII and does not end with Act V, and as this inscription occurs after V. 46, the word *agre* must be taken to refer to the rest of the text from Act V. 46 to the end of Act VII. In other words, Vināyaka must be taken as responsible not only for the text between Act V. 46 to the end of that Act, but also for Acts VI and VII in Recension B. But the text for Acts VI and VII in Recension B is identical with the text for those Acts in Recension A, which therefore must also be the work of Vināyaka, but which was indiscriminately incorporated into the anonymous Recension A. In other words, the Recension A extends only from Act V. 46 to

the end of that Act and does not include Acts VI and VII, for which it merely borrows the text of Recension B.

Todar Mall, however, appears to take *agre* as referring only to the portion between Act V. 46 to the end of that Act. In other words, he appears to think that Acts VI and VII in both Recensions A and B are of anonymous authorship; but with regard to the text between Act V. 46 to the end of that Act, the Recension A is anonymous, while Recension B is the work of Vināyaka. But unfortunately there are no data to establish this point. We are inclined to believe, for reasons given above, that the whole of the text from Act V. 46 to the end of Act VII is the work of Vināyaka. For the portion between Act V. 46 to the end of that Act, it is probable that there originally existed the longer text of Vināyaka in Recension B, but subsequently a shorter, anonymous text (as represented by Recension A) came into existence, receiving universal acceptance and even superseding the original text of Vināyaka.

## THE PROBLEM OF THE MAHĀNĀTAKA<sup>1</sup>

The so-called *Mahānātaka*, otherwise known as the *Hanuman-nātaka*, occupies a unique position in Sanskrit dramatic literature. Though technically designated a *nātaka*, it evinces peculiarities which justify Wilson's characterisation of the work as a nondescript composition and which have naturally given rise to much speculation with regard to its character and origin. It is a very extensive work which plagiarises unblushingly from most of the known (and probably some unknown) Rāma-dramas and is written almost entirely in verse, with little of prose. The verse is generally of the narrative or epic, rather than dramatic, character. There is little of true dialogue; there is no *Vidūṣaka* nor any Prakrit; the usual stage-directions are missing; the number of characters appearing is fairly large; there is a benediction, and in one recension a curious *prarocanā*-verse, but there is no true prologue, and all the elements of the plot prescribed by theory are wanting; the number of Acts, at least in one recension, is beyond the usual limit; in short, this work, though nominally exhibiting a dramatic form, gives one the impression of being a narrative composition as opposed to the dramatic, and could have as well been written in the narrative or epic form. It is devoid of all dramatic action, being rather a collection of poems, descriptive and narrative, with interspersed metrical dialogues of a crude nature and *quasi* stage-directions.

On the strength of these peculiarities Max Müller was of opinion<sup>2</sup> that the work was rather an epic than a true drama, and that it carries us back to the earliest stage of development of the Indian drama. This opinion has been repeated more than once by later scholars but in a somewhat modified form. Pischel pointed out<sup>3</sup> the resemblances of this work to Subhaṭa's *Dūtāngada*, which latter play was held by him to be an example of the so-called *chāyā-nātaka*, a term which he considered to be

<sup>1</sup> Read before the XVIIth International Congress of Orientalists at Oxford, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, 1846, i, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> In his *Das altindische Schattenspiel* in *SBAW*, 1906, pp. 482-502.

equivalent to a 'schattenspiel,' often rendered into English as 'shadow-play'. This thesis was further developed by Lüders<sup>1</sup> who would take the *Dūlāngada* as the type of the shadow-play and then deduce that the *Mahānāṭaka* also belonged to the same category, of which it is supposed to be one of the earliest specimens. With this view Sten Konow,<sup>2</sup> Winternitz,<sup>3</sup> and some other scholars appear to agree. But Keith in his recent work on Sanskrit Drama reopens the question<sup>4</sup> and throws doubt on the whole theory of the shadow-play and its alleged part in the early evolution of the Sanskrit Drama. He refuses to agree with Lüders in adding the *Mahānāṭaka* to "the almost non-existing list of shadow-dramas" and suggests that the irregularities of this work can be explained by the assumption that it was a play never intended to be acted, and that it was a literary *tour de force* redacted "in preparation for some form of performance in which the dialogue was plentifully ecked out by the director and the other actors."

The *Mahānāṭaka* has come down to us in different recensions. The West Indian recension redacted by Dāmodara Miśra has 548 verses in 14 Acts and is styled the *Hanūman-nāṭaka*, while the East Indian or rather the Bengal recension arranged by Madhusūdana Miśra<sup>5</sup> has 720 verses in 9 Acts<sup>6</sup> and is named the *Mahānāṭaka*. Both the recensions agree in taking the mythical Hanūmat as the original author. In a sense, however, the work may be taken to be anonymous, for both the titles are clearly descriptive. Hanūmat, as the ally and servant of Rāma, is a legendary figure to whom it was probably found convenient to ascribe a traditional work of unknown or forgotten author-

<sup>1</sup> In his *Die Sanskritkias : ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des indischen Dramas* in *SBAW*, 1916, pp. 698f.

<sup>2</sup> *Das indische Drama* (Grundriss), 1920, pp. 89-90.

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur* (1920), iii, p. 243 ; in *ZDMG*, lxxiv, pp. 118f, he supports Lüders, but recognizes the difficulties of the hypothesis.

<sup>4</sup> *The Sanskrit Drama*, 1924, pp. 33f., 53f., 269f.

<sup>5</sup> Lüders has shown that MSS of this recension are also found in Western India ; but this fact makes no difference, and there is no doubt that it prevails in Bengal.

<sup>6</sup> The number of verses vary greatly in MSS and editions, as discussed below. The number adopted here is Aufrecht's (*Bodleian Catalogue*, p. 142b).

ship; while the title *Mahānāṭaka* is apparently not a designation but a description, it being the later dramaturgic technical term which, like the term *prakarana*, indicates a type of play containing all the episodes and possessing a large number (usually the number is ten) of Acts. It is significant that the term is unknown to Bharata and Dhanika, the two earlier authorities on Dramaturgy. They simply lay down<sup>1</sup> that in a *nāṭaka* the number of Acts should not be less than five and more than ten; but the author of the *Sāhitya-darpāṇa*, who flourished probably in the first half of the 14th century, defines and explains<sup>2</sup> the term *Mahānāṭaka* as noted above.

The association with Hanūmat is supported by a legendary account of the origin of the work. The concluding verse in Dāmodara's version states that the work was composed by the Son of the Wind (Hanūmat), but was cast into the sea by Vālmīki who deemed it to be ambrosia (*amṛta-buddhyā*) and that it was later on recovered by the good king Bhoja and redacted by Miśra Dāmodara.<sup>3</sup> In his comment on this verse Mohanadāsa explains that Hanūmat wrote this work and engraved it with his nails on the rocks, but to please Vālmīki, who recognised its excellence and anticipated eclipse of his own *Rāmāyaṇa*, the generous Ape threw it into the sea whence it was, after ages, recovered by his *avatāra* Bhoja with the aid of fishermen.<sup>4</sup> The Bhoja-prabandha also records<sup>5</sup> the anecdote

<sup>1</sup> *Nāṭya-śāstra* xviii. 28; *Dāśarūpaka* (ed. Nir. Sag. Press, 1917), iii. 38. The *Rasārṇava-sudhikara*, (ed. Trivandrum, p. 285, agrees. It is noteworthy that the majority of Dacca University MSS of Madhusūdana's recension give ten Acts, instead of nine.

<sup>2</sup> VI. 223-224, ed. Durgaprasad, 1915, p. 335.

<sup>3</sup> *racitam anūlāputreṇāthā vālmikinābdhau  
nibhātam amṛta-buddhyā pran mahānāṭakāḥ yat /  
sumati-nṛpati-bhojenoddhṛtān tat krameṇa  
grathitam avatu vīrash miśra-dāmodarena //*

<sup>4</sup> *atreyam kathā—pīrava etena nakhara-pāṇkair giri-śilāu vīrkhitam  
tat tu vālmikinā dṛṣṭom/tad etasyātī-madhuravām ākārya rāmāyaṇa-  
pracārābdhāvā-śāṅkoyd hanūmān prārthitas vām etat samudre nīdhehīti /  
tatketi tenābdhau prāpitaṁ tadaवात्मेणा bhojena sumatiñā jālikair* (the printed text reads *jala-jñānair*) *uddhṛtam iti.*

<sup>5</sup> Ed. Nir. Sag. Press, Bombay 1921, pp. 70f. Wilson gives a somewhat different version (*Select Specimens*, 2 vols. in one, Appendix p. 62). The *Bhoja-prabandha*, according to him, records the anecdote that a merchant in Bhoja's reign discovered some verses engraved on the rocks by the seashore and brought a copy of the first two lines of one verse. Bhoja

that certain fishermen once found an engraved stone in the Narmadā and brought it to Bhoja who, recognising it to be the work of Hanūmat, made a copy of it and had it put together by his court-poets. The two lines which were brought to Bhoja occur as the first two lines of the verse *iha khalu viśamah* in the *Mahānāṭaka* (xiv. 49) in Dāmodara's recension, but the verse is missing in Madhusūdana's redaction. It is noteworthy, however, that the verse is an ordinary gnomic stanza which is utilised for the purpose of moralising on the death of Rāvana. In Madhusūdana's recension, on the other hand, there is after the benediction a *pravocanā*-verse in which Hanūmat is said to have narrated the story at the direction of Vālmīki, and the concluding verse of each Act states that the work of Hanūmat was rescued (*pratyuddhyta*) by Vikrama (*vikramaiḥ*). The phrase has been explained simply as 'recovered by means of valour': but the commentator Candraśekhara<sup>1</sup> explains that Hanūmat having engraved the work on the rocks threw it into the sea through fear of Vālmīki, but later on he appeared in a dream to king Vikramāditya who, at Hanūmat's bidding, had it fished out of the sea and redacted by his court-poet Madhusūdana. The commentator also refers to another version of the story, according to which the work is said to have been stolen by Rākṣasas but recovered later on by the valour (*vikrama*) of that king.

It is not difficult to see that there is a good deal of mere fable in these accounts; but the tradition, which more or less agrees in the three versions of the story, certainly suggests the redaction of an old anonymous work, or at least the writing of a new work with the embodiment of old matter. Although a considerable number of verses is common to both the recensions, the one recension cannot be said to have been derived from the other. On the contrary, it is probable that each of them was redacted independently from some lost original, of which the tradition preserves a legendary account. Of the compilers Dāmodara and Madhusūdana we have no authentic information. In the *Bhoja-prabandha* the poets, who-

travelled to the spot to obtain the other two lines, and the verse when completed is the one which occurs in Dāmodara's version as xiv. 49 (*iha khalu viśamah*).

<sup>1</sup> On i. 48, ed. Candraśekhara Bhāṭṭācārya, Calcutta, 1796.

are called upon to fill up the deficient verse discovered by Bhoja, are Bhvabhūti and Kālidāsa; but one Dāmodara is mentioned elsewhere in the same work as a court-poet to king Bhoja of Dhārā, who (if he were the historical Bhoja) reigned in the second quarter of the 11th century A.D. There is nothing inherently impossible in the report of a drama in stone-inscription, for such dramas have been discovered in recent times, but we have no other historical information about the source from which both the recensions were derived. We have, however, enough indication to presume that an essential portion of the work was probably old and formed the nucleus round which was woven a large number of verses culled chiefly from various known and unknown Rāma-dramas. This may have been done in the time of Bhoja, whose energy in making cyclopaedic compilations is well known, but the process of interpolation, as we shall see presently, continued for a long time, and verses from comparatively recent Rāma-dramas found their way into the compendium. The question as to which of the two recensions is earlier is not yet solved, but it seems probable that Dāmodara's versions, in spite of its 14 Acts, is the earlier, as it is also the simpler and less extensive redaction. The Vikramāditya referred to in Madhusūdana's version may have been Lakṣmaṇa-sena of Bengal, who appears to have had also nine gems at his court and to have been known by the title of Vikramāditya. We have a verse attributed to Dhoyī in the *Sadukti-karpāmṛta*, the first half of which agrees partially with the verse 101 of Dhoyī's *Pavānādūta*<sup>1</sup> and which makes it probable that Lakṣmaṇa-sena as a poet and patron of poets was known by this time-honoured title.

The comparative antiquity of the *Mahānāṭaka* is sought to be established by the fact that Ānandavardhana, who flourished in the middle of the 9th century at Kashmir, and

<sup>1</sup> *Mydī gaś ca śrutiḍharataya vikramāditya-gopīhi-  
vidyā-bhartuḥ khalu varuṇeśaśasāda pratīṣṭām.*

(ed Cintāmaṇi Chakravarti, Calcutta 1926, p. 34, also Introd. p. 7). See also *JASB*, 1906, p. 15. In the verse the poet, who lived at the court of Lakṣmaṇa-sena, is speaking of himself and his patron, and there is an obvious pun in the phrase *vikramāditya* etc.

Dhanika, who belonged to the end of the 10th century, quote verses which occur in the work. The three quotations by Ānandavārdhana in his *Dhcanyāloka* are, however, anonymous and therefore not conclusive, the more so because the *Mahānāṭaka* is notorious for its shameless plagiarism. The first verse *snigdha-śyāmala-kānti*° (Dhv° p. 61= *Mahā*° M v. 7) is really taken from the *Rāmābhyudaya* of Yaśovarman¹; the second verse *raktas tvam nava-pallavaiḥ* (Dhv° p. 90= *Mahā*° M iv. 35=D v. 24) is ascribed to Yaśovarman in the *Subhāṣitāvalī* (no. 1364) and is probably borrowed from the same drama; while the source of the third verse *nyakkāro hy ayam eṣa* (Dhv° p. 153= *Mahā*° M ix. 55), which is cited by a series of rhetoricians, is unknown. Dhanika quotes five verses which occur in the *Mahānāṭaka*, but all of them, except one, are given without any indication of their source. The one exception refers to the verses *bāhvīr balam na viditam* (= *Mahā*° M ii. 14=D i. 38) is quoted in the *Vṛtti* on ii. 2 with *yathā hanūman-nāṭake*; but the verse is actually derived from the *Bāla-rāmāyaṇa* (iv. 60). The fact that one of the remaining verses *kapole jānakyāḥ* (= *Maha*° M iii. 54=D i. 19) is also quoted anonymously by Rājaśekhara in his *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* (p. 97) proves nothing. A large number of quotations, mostly anonymous, from the *Mahānāṭaka* is also found in the Sanskrit Anthologies. Of these the *Śāṅgadharapaddhati* gives ten quotations as *hanūmataḥ*, of which nos. 83, 123-125, 128, 133, 3418 and 4066 cannot be traced in any of the recensions of the *Mahānāṭaka*. Only no. 90 (*vighneśo vāḥ sa pāyād vihṛiṣu*) occurs as the second *māṅgala-śloka* of Madhusūdana's recension, and no. 1248 (*kūrmāḥ pādo'tra*) is found as vi. 67 in Madhusūdana and xiv. 77 in Dāmodara. This anthology was compiled about 1363 A.D. and its quotations only prove at best that both the recensions probably existed in the first half of the 14th century. Even if no great antiquity can be claimed for the work itself, the presumption is permissible that a fragmentary nucleus of it existed in the time of Bhoja, or even a little earlier in the time of Dhanika, from which the later elaborate versions, which cull verses from the *Mahāvīracarita*, *Bāla-rāmāyaṇa*, *Anargha-rāghava*, *Prasanna-rāghava*:

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras, i, pt. 3, p. 270, fn. 1.

and other known and unknown Rāma-plays, arose in later times and were probably in existence in the 14th century.

In order to explain the origin of the drama which the Indian tradition envelops in the mystery of legends, it has been suggested that the *Mahānāṭaka* belongs to the category of the so-called shadow-play, a view which envelops it equally in the mist of sheer speculation. Although it has been held by Pischel and others to connote a shadow-play, the meaning of the term *chāyā-nāṭaka*, which is nowhere connected with the *Mahānāṭaka* but which is used in some other plays alleged to be of the irregular type, is uncertain. It is not recognised in any Sanskrit work on Dramaturgy as designating a dramatic genre, but several dramatic compositions like the *Dharmābhuyudaya*, of Meghaprabhācārya, the *Dūtāṅgada* of Subhaṭa, the *Rāmābhuyudaya*, *Subhadra-parivaya* and *Pāṇḍavābhuyudaya* of Rāmadeva-Vyāsa, have been designated as *chāyā-nāṭaka* in their respective *prastavanās* or colophons. Wilson<sup>1</sup> held that the term *chāyā-nāṭaka* might mean 'the shade or outline of a drama' and expressed the opinion that the *Dūtāṅgada* "was perhaps intended to introduce a spectacle of the drama and procession, as it is otherwise difficult to conceive what object its extreme conciseness could have effected". Lévi<sup>2</sup> appears to leave the question open, but remarks: "Leur nom est obscur; on serait tenté de l'expliquer par "ombre de drame" si les règles de la grammaire ne s'opposaient à cette analyse du composé *chāyā-nāṭaka*. Elles admettent du moins une explication voisine et presque identique: "drame à l'état d'ombre". Rajendralala Mitra<sup>3</sup> describes Viṭṭhala's so-called *chāyā-nāṭaka* as "an outline of a drama" and suggests that the *Dūtāṅgada* "was evidently intended to serve as an *entr'acte* to a theatrical exhibition." Other suggested but rejected explanations are "a play that is but a shadow, a play in shadow, i.e. a miniature play".<sup>4</sup> Having reference to the derivative nature of such plays as the *Dūtāṅgada*, which incorporates verses from other plays, it is not impossible to hold that the term *chāyā-nāṭaka*

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Théâtre indien*, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> *Bikaner Catalogue*, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> See Gray in *JAS*, xxxii, p. 60.

may also mean "an epitomised adaptation of previous plays on the subject," the term *chāya* being authoritatively used in the sense of adaptation.<sup>1</sup> Pischel was originally of opinion<sup>2</sup> that the term might be explained as "the shadow of a drama" (Schatten von einem Spiel) or "a half-play" (halbes Drama) but in his well-known monograph on the Indian shadow-play<sup>3</sup> he attempted to shew that the *chāyā-nāṭaka* was simply and solely what is known as the shadow-play, in which the shadow-pictures were produced by projection from puppets on the reverse side of a thin white curtain.

In order to establish the early existence of the shadow-play in India it is alleged that this form of the drama is expressly mentioned by Nilakanṭha in his interpretation of the term *rūpopajīvana* occurring in the *Mahābhārata* xii, 294, 5 : *rūpopajīvanam jalamanḍapikesi dāksinātyesu prasiddham, yatra sūkṣma-vastram vyavadhāya carmamayaīr ākārai rājāmātyādīnām caryā pradarśyate*, "*rūpopajīvana* is well-known among the southerners as the *jalamanḍapikā*, in which, having interposed a thin cloth, the action of kings, ministers etc. is shown by means of leathern figures." Lüders would maintain with Pischel that *rūpopajīvana* refers here to the production of shadow-figures. The term *rūpopajīvin* is used by Varāhamihira in his *Bṛhat-saṃhitā*, v. 74, while in the *Therīgāthā*, v. 394 and in the *Milindapañha*, p. 344 occur the terms *rūpparūpaka* and *rūpadakkha* respectively, of which the last expression is supposed to be identical with the word *lūpadakkha* found in the Jogimara Cave Inscription.<sup>4</sup> A suggestion has also been made by Sten Konow<sup>5</sup> that the word *rūpa* used in the Fourth Rock Edict of Aśoka, where exhibitions of the spectacles of the dwellings of gods, of elephants and

<sup>1</sup> This word *chāya* is used commonly, in connexion with the question of borrowing or plagiarism, to denote likeness or resemblance between the works of two poets, and *chāyopajīcī* is one who composes poems which are reflections of other poet's works. See Kṣemendra, *Kari-kāṇṭhādbhārata*, ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeiger*, 1891, pp. 358f.

<sup>3</sup> Already cited.

<sup>4</sup> *Annual Report, ASI*, 1903-4, pp. 128f; Lüders, *Bruchstücke Buddhistischer Dramen*, p. 41; Vāmana, *Kāryādākāra-sūtra*, iii, 2, 8; Rājāśekhara, *Kārya-mimāṃsa*, ch. xii.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

of bon-fires are mentioned, refers to a shadow-play; and that the expression *rūpaka* as the generic name of the drama is derived from such early shadow-projections. Indications of such a shadow-device are said to have been discovered in the Sita-benga Cave which has signs of grooves in front, meant (it is alleged) for the curtain necessary for a shadow-play. This theory is further elaborated by Lüders,<sup>1</sup> who claims a high antiquity for the shadow-play on the assumption that it is referred to by Patañjali in his *Mahābhāṣya* (on Pāṇini iii. 1. 26)<sup>2</sup> in his mention of the displays of the Śaubhikas or Śobhanikas, and who on this basis would take it, with Pischel, as an essential element in the evolution of the Sanskrit drama. The existence of the shadow-play in early India is also supported by the analogy of the Javanese *wayang purwa*, a shadow-play usually dealing with the Rāma-cycle and produced by puppets of buffalo-leather.

The early evidence adduced for the existence of the shadow-play in India cannot in any way be taken as conclusive. We are not directly concerned here with Lüders' hypothesis regarding the Śaubhikas; but the name Śaubhika or Śobhanika is, at best, an obscure term which has not been shewn to have any relation to the shadow-play and which has never been explained in this sense by any authority. Hillebrandt<sup>3</sup> and Keith<sup>4</sup> have very effectively criticised Lüders' interpretation and suggested more reasonable explanations; but whether we accept their view, or agree with Weber<sup>5</sup> that the reference here is to the pantomime, or even take the explanation of Kaiyyaṭa (a fairly late commentator) that the Śaubhikas were those who taught actors (*natānām vyākhyānopādhyāyāb*), it is clear enough that there is no real foundation for the view that the Śaubhikas discharged the function of showing shadow-figures and explaining them to the audience. The passage of Nīlakanṭha, again, cannot be taken as proving conclusively the

<sup>1</sup> In the article already cited.

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Kielhorn, ii, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *ZDMG*, lxxii, pp. 227f; also see his *Über die Anfänge des indischen Dramas*, München 1914, pp. 6f, 18f.

<sup>4</sup> *BSOS* i, pt. 4, pp. 27f; *Sanskrit Drama*, pp. 33f.

<sup>5</sup> *Indische Studien*, xiii, pp. 488f.

existence of the shadow-play, for he might as well be referring to the puppet-shows or marionette theatre, of whose existence we have definite record; and even if Nilakantha's testimony is not contested, it only proves the existence of such plays in Southern India (*dāksinātyesu*) at the end of the 17th century. It is not yet proved that the Javanese borrowed it from Southern India, and the fact that some kind of shadow-drama, dealing with the Rāma-legend obtained in Java has in itself nothing whatever to do with the hypothesis that its analogue prevailed in India, until it is shewn beyond doubt that the idea was really borrowed from India. Even as a parallel it is not, as Keith points out, adequate, "unless and until it can be proved that the shadow-play sprang up in Java without any previous knowledge of the real drama." Turning to the passage of the *Mahābhārata* itself on which Nilakantha comments :

*raṅgāvataranām caiva tathā rūpopajīvanam<sup>1</sup> /  
madya-maṇīsoपajīvyam ca vikrayam loha-carmavoh //*

we notice that the term is used in the same context with appearance on the stage, drinking, eating flesh and other objectionable practices which degrade the status of a *dvija*. It is quite possible to argue, as it has been argued, that the term *rūpopajīvana* alluded to the deplorable immorality of the actors, who have been stigmatised more than once as *jāyā-jīva*, "living by the dishonour of their wives."<sup>2</sup> The same explanation applies to Varāhamihira's use of the term *rūpopajīvin* for the actor, in close proximity in the text to painters, writers and singers; while the term *rūpadakkha* or *lūpadakkha* is capable of other explanations<sup>3</sup> than the highly conjectural solution of an actor in the shadow-drama. Mrs. Rhys Davids renders the word *rūpparūpaka* of the *Therīgāthā* v. 394 by "puppet-show," and this is probable in view of the fact that in verses 390, 391 of the text there is mention of a puppet. Keith has already shewn<sup>4</sup> that the word *rūpa* in Aśoka's inscription, as well as the term *rūpaka* as the generic name of the

<sup>1</sup> The term *śilpopajīvana* is used in the preceding verse in the sense of livelihood by means of some arts.

<sup>2</sup> Pischel interprets the word as "copyist," Boyer as "sculptor," Bloch as "one skilled in paintings", while S. K. Chatterji suggests "skilled in figures or accounts."

<sup>3</sup> *Sanskrit Drama*, p. 54.

drama, can have no reference to the shadow-play, and the alleged evidence of a shadow device in the Sītābenga Cave is nothing more than mere conjecture.

As no definite reference to the shadow-play can, so far, be proved anywhere in Sanskrit literature, and as the dramatic *genre* is unrecognised in theory, no other evidence is left but that derived from the term *chāyā-nāṭaka* itself, which is used as a descriptive epithet in the prologue or colophon of certain existing plays. Of these works the most interesting, if not the earliest, is the *Dharmābhuyudaya* of Meghprabhācārya, which is edited in the Jaina-Ātmānanda-Granthamālā Series (Bhavnagar 1918) and of which a brief résumé is given by Hultzch.<sup>1</sup> In the colophon it is styled *dharmābhuyudaya nāma chāyā-nāṭya-prabandhah*; but in the prologue, the Sūtradhāra speaks of actors (*śailūṣāḥ*) and acting (*abhinaya*). There is, however, a definite stage-direction in it which is said to support its claim to be recognised as a shadow-play. As the king takes the vow to become an ascetic, the stage-direction reads: *yāmanikāntarād yati-veṣa-dhārī putrakas tatra sthāpanīyah* (p. 15) "from the inner side of the curtain is to be placed a puppet wearing the dress of an ascetic." A reference is found here in the word *sthāpanīya* to the *sthāpaka* of the regular drama who is supposed to have been originally "the arranger of puppets." We have no information about the date of the play, but that it is a late and obscure Jaina drama admits of little doubt, and its evidence as such is of doubtful value. One need not, however, see in the stage-direction any definite reference to the shadow-play; on the contrary, it is a puppet (*putraka*) which is directed to be placed, apparently on the stage, from the inner side of the curtain, i.e., from the *nepathyā*. It is difficult also to accept the rather fanciful interpretation of the word *sthāpanīya*, which is really not necessary, as the simple meaning of the word is that which is obviously intended. Although the drama styles itself a *chāyā-nāṭya-prabandha* in the colophon, it is in all other respects an ordinary, if unpretentious, play of the usual type, dealing with the Jaina legend of king Daśārṇabhadra. It is a short play, which consists of one Act but three or four scenes, with a regular *nāndī*, *prarocanā* and *prastāvānā*; and we have, with the one

<sup>1</sup> *ZDMG*, lxxv, p. 69.

exception, referred to above, the usual stage-directions, enough prose and verse dialogues and some Prakrit prose and verse. There is also the usual *bharata-vākya* at the end spoken by one of the characters.

It is curious that no such stage-directions are to be found in the other so-called *chāyā-nāṭakas*, not even in the *Dūtāṅgada* which is probably the earliest of the group and which is upheld by Pischel and Lüders as the typical specimen. Of these later plays, the three dramas of Rāmadeva-Vyāsa, who was patronised by the Haihya princes of the Kalacuri branch of Rāyapura and who thus belonged to the first half of the 13th century,<sup>1</sup> are not admitted even by Lüders to be *chāyā-nāṭakas* at all. The first drama, *Subhadrā-parinaya*<sup>2</sup>, consisting of one Act but three scenes, has a theme which is sufficiently explained by its title; the second, *Rāmābhuyudaya*<sup>3</sup>, also a short play in two Acts, deals with the time-worn topic of the conquest of Laṅkā, the fire ordeal of Sītā and Rāma's return to Ayodhyā; while the third play, *Pāṇḍavābhuyudaya*<sup>4</sup> also in two Acts, describes the birth and *svayamivara* of Draupadī. If we leave aside the self-adopted title *chāyā-nāṭaka*, these plays do not differ in any respect from the ordinary drama, and there is nothing in them which would enable us to arrive at a decision with regard to their alleged character of a *chāyā-nāṭaka*. The anonymous *Haridūta*,<sup>5</sup> which deals in three scenes with the theme of Kṛṣṇa's mission to Duryodhana on behalf of Yudhiṣṭhīra, is regarded as an imitation of *Dūtāṅgada* and assigned by Lüders to the class of *chāyā-nāṭakas*; but its story corresponds to the *Dūta-vākya* of Bhāsa, and it resembles in all respects an ordinary play. Even Pischel doubts whether this work can be rightly considered a *chāyā-nāṭaka*. These short pieces may have been meant for some festive entertainments and therefore

<sup>1</sup> See Bendall in *JRAS*, 1896, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> MS of this work noticed in Bendall's *Catalogue of MSS in the British Museum*, no. 271, pp. 106f; for an analysis of the play, see Lévi, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> MSS noticed in Bendall, *op. cit.*, no. 272, pp. 107-8; in Peterson's *Ulwar Catalogue*, extracts, p. 72; *Descriptive Cat. of Skt. MSS in the Govt. Oriental MSS Library*, Madras, no. 12636. Analysed by Lévi, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>4</sup> Eggeling, *India Office Manuscripts*, vii, p. 1602, no. 4187 (2353b).

<sup>5</sup> Bendall, *op. cit.*, no. 270, p. 106. Analysed by Lévi, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

make some concession to popular taste by not conforming strictly to the orthodox types; but the *Haridūta* in particular does not describe itself as a *chāyā-nāṭaka* and there is no reason why we should regard it as such. The *Ānanda-latikā*,<sup>1</sup> again, which is regarded by Sten Konow as a shadow-play, is really a dramatic poem in five sections, called *kusumas*, on the love of Sama and Revā composed by Kṛṣṇanātha Sārvabhauma-bhāṭṭācārya, son of Durgādāsa Cakravartin. Eggeling describes it in the following words: "Though exhibiting some of the forms of a *nāṭaka* (and marked as such outside), the work is devoid of all real dramatic action, being rather a collection of poetry, descriptive and narrative, with interspersed dialogues and *quasi* stage-directions." The same remarks apply to the modern *Citra-yajña* described by Wilson, who is undoubtedly right in pointing out its similarities to the popular *yātrā*.<sup>2</sup> Rajendralal Mitra<sup>3</sup> also mentions a *chāya-nāṭaka* by Viṭṭhala, which he describes as "an outline of a drama founded on the history of the Adil Shahi dynasty"; but of this nothing further is known.

This leaves us with the *Dūtāṅgada* of Subhaṭa, which also describes itself as a *chāyā-nāṭaka* and which has been definitely cited as a typical example by the exponents of the shadow-play hypothesis. The play was produced, according to its prologue, at the court of Tribhuvanapāla, who appears to be the Calukyan prince of that name, who reigned at Anahillapāṭṭaka or Anhilvad in Gujarat at about 1242-43 A.D. It was presented at a spring festival in commemoration of the dead prince Kumārapāla-deva of the same dynasty. The event particularly commemorated appears to be Kumārapāla's restoration of the Śaiva temple of Debapattana or Somnāth in Kathiawad, and the occasion, as given in one MS (*yātrāyāḥ dola-parvāyi*), was the *dol* or *holi* festival held in the month of Phālguṇa (March-April).<sup>4</sup> It is a

<sup>1</sup> Eggeling, *op. cit.*, vii, p. 1624, no. 4203(243).

<sup>2</sup> Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Bikaner Catalogue*, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> See Bendall in *JRAS*, 1898, pp. 229-230, also his *Catalogue of Skt. MSS in the British Museum*, no. 269, pp. 105-6, and Gray in *JAOS*, xxxii, pp. 58-9. Analysis of the play given by Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-2 and Aufrecht, *Bodleian Catalogue*, p. 139 (shorter recension); English trs. (shorter recension) in Gray, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-77. MSS in the catalogues mentioned here and below, footnote 2, next page.

short dramatic composition in four scenes, the theme being the same as that of Act vii (Madhusūdana's version) of the *Mahānāṭaka*, which deals with the sending of Aṅgada<sup>1</sup> by Rāma to demand restoration of Sītā from Rāvaṇa. The work exists in various forms; but a longer and a shorter recension have been distinguished. The shorter recension has already been edited in *Kāvyamālā* no. 28, 1891 (new edition, 1922). The longer recension is given by a MS in the India Office and is thus described by Eggeling<sup>2</sup>: "Not only is the dialogue itself considerably extended in this version by the insertion of many additional stanzas, but narrative verses are also thrown in, calculated to make the work a curious hybrid between a dramatic piece (with stage-directions) and a narrative poem. This latter character of the composition is made still more pronounced by an introduction of 39 (12 + 27) stanzas in mixed metres (partly, however, placed in the mouths of Rāma and Hanūmat) referring to incidents which lead to the discovery of Sītā's hiding-place." This recension must be of later origin, for most of the supplementary verses are derived from comparatively late Rāma-dramas. For instance, verses 4 (*ā dvīpāt parato'pyamī*) and 6 (*bho brahma bhavatā*) are taken from *Prasānna-rāghava*, while verse 5 (*yad babhañja janakātmajā-kṛte*), as well as the verse *jayati raghu-vāṁśa-tilakah*, occurs in the *Mahānāṭaka*. The shorter recension is also in the nature of a compilation; and in the closing verse, which is omitted in the longer version, the author says<sup>3</sup> that he has not hesitated in drawing upon his predecessors for material, his chief sources being Bhavabhūti, Murāri, Rājaśekhara and the *Mahānāṭaka*. Even such gnomic verses as *udyoginām puruso-simham upaiti lakṣmīḥ*, well-known from the *Hītōpadeśa*, is found in the work.

Pischel was undoubtedly right in calling attention to the resemblance in this and other points between the *Dūtāṅgada* and the *Mahānāṭaka*, as distinguished from the other so-called *chāyā-nāṭakas*; but there is no evidence to establish that

<sup>1</sup> The word *dātāṅgada* is already used in Dāmodara's version, ed. Bombay 1909, Act xi, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vii, no. 4189.

<sup>3</sup> *sva-nirmitash kīścana gudya-padya-bandhan kiyat prāktana-sat-kaīndraibh | proktam gr̥hīte praviracyate sma rasādhyam etat subhāfena naṣyam ||*

either of them is a shadow-play. The prevalence of verse, more narrative than dramatic, over the scanty prose, the absence of real prose dialogues and the omission of the *Vidūṣaka* are features which are shared by the *Dūtāṅgada* with the other so-called *chāyā-nāṭakas* already discussed, but which are in themselves not inexplicable. The work, however, is not anonymous as the *Mahānāṭaka*; there is a regular prologue, as also some stage directions; the theme is limited; and the number of persons appearing is not large, nor is Prakrit altogether omitted.<sup>1</sup> To all appearances it is an ordinary, if not insignificant, play of the usual type, composed frankly for some festive occasion, which fact may explain its alleged laxity or want of strict conformity to the orthodox drama. The usual prologue consists of the preliminary benediction and conversation between the *Sūtradhāra* and the *Naṭī*, leading up to the drama. The drama consists of four scenes; in the first, *Āṅgada* is sent as a messenger to demand *Sītā*; in the second, *Bibhīṣaṇa* and *Mandodarī* attempt to dissuade *Rāvaṇa* from his fatal folly; in the third, *Āṅgada* executes his mission, but on *Rāvaṇa*'s endeavour to persuade him, with the illusion of *māyā-sītā*, that *Sītā* is in love with the lord of *Laṅkā*, *Āṅgada* refuses to be deceived and leaves *Rāvaṇa* with threats; and in the fourth, two *Gandharvas* inform us that *Rāvaṇa* is slain, on which *Rāma* enters in triumph. There is no indication anywhere that it was meant for shadow-picture; and apart from the term *chāyā-nāṭaka*, examples of such brief spectacular plays on the well-known themes of the two epics are neither surprising nor rare.

We have already pointed out that the *chāyā-nāṭaka* is not a category of dramatic composition and is unknown as such to writers on Dramaturgy, early or late. These plays, on the other hand, are to all intents and purposes dramas proper, and may be classified as any other *rūpaka* or *uparūpaka*. If they lack enough dramatic action, it is a fault which they share with many other so-called dramas in Sanskrit, which are in reality dramatic poems; and there is hardly anything in them, except their self-description as *chāyā-nāṭaka*, which

<sup>1</sup> Keith (op. cit. p. 56) is not correct when he speaks of absence of Prakrit in the *Dūtāṅgada*.

would stamp them out as irregular species. It would seem, therefore, that the term *chāyā-nāṭaka*, as also its equivalent 'schattenspiel', refers rather to the product than the process. Rajendralal's conjecture that it served as an *entr'acte* to a theatrical exhibition may be easily dismissed, as there is no evidence for the existence of such entertainments as would correspond roughly to the English *interlude* or the Italian *intermezzi*. In view of certain irregularities which may be discovered in such plays, the explanation that it was 'a drama in the state of a shadow' or 'the outline of a drama' has been suggested; but it is possible also to suggest that it was a *chāyā* or adaptation of existing works on the subject for a particular purpose. What the purpose was is not very clear, but there is nothing to shew that the compositions were meant for shadow-pictures. It is probable, on the contrary, that these works, produced for particular festivals, were composed as recitable poems which could be sung, or even (as in the case of the *Dūtāṅgada*) as a compilation from previous works; while the peculiarities of form and spirit, partly due to the nature and occasion of the composition, may suggest that popular festive entertainments like the *yātrā* probably reacted on the literary drama. In any case, we are dealing here with late developments of the Sanskrit drama, and irregularities, such as they are, would not be out of place. Whatever interpretation may be urged of the term *chāyā-nāṭaka*, it is at least clear that the hypothesis of the shadow-play is uncalled for and without any foundation, and it would certainly not be safe to derive from these admittedly late productions any evidence for the growth of the early drama, or draw any inference from them as to the part alleged to have been played by the shadow-play in its evolution.

Whatever may be the case with the *Dūtāṅgada* and the other plays, the *Mahānāṭaka* is never described as a *chāyā-nāṭaka*, and the shadow-play solution is still more inapplicable to its markedly peculiar features. That it is a drama of the irregular type, more than any of the plays mentioned above, is admitted on all hands. One may go further and say that it is hardly a drama at all. It may at this point be contended that the *chāyā-nāṭaka* has also no claim to be considered as a drama proper, and in this sense there is no reason why

the *Mahānāṭaka* should not be called a *chāyā-nāṭaka*. It may be replied that the point still remains that this work, unlike the other plays mentioned above, has never been so called, and that there is no authority or tradition for such a description. It is possible to imagine a small spectacular play being utilised for the purpose of shadow-pictures, but it is impossible to believe that an extensive work of a rambling kind, consisting of 9 or 14 Acts and ambitiously compiling and chronicling the entire Rāma-carita, could have been meant for such an object. There is nothing in the work itself nor in the trend of its plot and treatment which lends the slightest plausibility to such a view.

To suggest with Keith that here we have a literary drama, a play never intended to be acted but meant as a literary *tour de force*, is not to offer a solution but to avoid the question. In no sense can the *Mahānāṭaka* be regarded as a *tour de force*, and its artistic merits, apart from the descriptive verses which are mostly borrowed, are almost negligible. It cannot be argued that its apparently immature dramatic form and treatment betoken an early age when the drama had not properly emerged from the epic condition, for, the quasi-dramatic presentation is not spontaneous but intentional. The work is undoubtedly late and highly stylised, and we are here far removed from anything primitive. That some old matter was worked up into an extensive compilation is obvious, and it is also admitted that it is not a normal drama; but to explain the purpose of the play and its irregularities by suggesting that it looks like a literary exercise is to confess one's inability to explain it satisfactorily; for there are indications, as Keith himself admits, that the work was meant and probably utilised for some kind of performance.

It is clear that the *Mahānāṭaka*, as well as most of the plays discussed above, belongs to comparatively recent times, so that any data furnished by them should be cautiously used for any theory about the origin and development of the Sanskrit drama. Nor should the character of such types of plays as the *Mahānāṭaka* be determined without any reference to the literary conditions obtaining at the period in which they could be presumed to have been put in their present form. Whether we accept the time of Bhoja as the period when one

of the versions of the *Mahānāṭaka* was redacted, it is clear enough that we cannot assign any of the versions to a very early age, nor could it be shewn that it was put together at a time when the Sanskrit drama could be assumed to have been in its most flourishing period of development. On the contrary, the assumption would not be unreasonable that the *Mahānāṭaka* was redacted at a time when the classical Sanskrit drama was in its decline, and when at the break up of the old and more or less stereotyped dramatic literature, such irregular types as we are considering could easily have come into existence. We must not also forget that the Apabhrānsa and the vernacular literature were by this time slowly but surely coming into prominence, and that along with them popular entertainments like the religious *yātrās*, with their mythological theme, quasi-dramatic presentment and preference for recitation or singing, were establishing themselves. Having regard to this fact, as well as to the peculiar trend and treatment of such works as the *Mahānāṭaka*, we find no special reason to doubt that vernacular semi-dramatic entertainments of popular origin must have reacted on the literary Sanskrit drama and influenced its form and manner to such an extent as to produce irregular and apparently nondescript types. It is true that the *yātrā* had little pretension to a literary character, while the types of plays we are discussing have a highly stylised form, but it is conceivable that these so-called plays might have been adapted and composed in Sanskrit for a more cultivated and sophisticated audience on the parallel furnished by the popular *yātrā*. In other words, they were something like Sanskrit *yātrās*, which exhibited outwardly some of the forms of the regular drama and had a mature literary style, but which approximated more distinctly towards the popular *yātrā* in spirit and mode of operation. As such, these apparently irregular types were not mere literary exercises but represented a living form of quasi-dramatic performance. This conjecture is perhaps more in keeping with the nature of these compositions and the period in which they were probably redacted than the unwarranted and unconvincing solution of a shadow-play theory.

Turning to the work itself, we find that the *Mahānāṭaka* gives us a form of entertainment not represented by any

Sanskrit drama so far published, in spite of the assertion that the *Dūtāṅgada* is the nearest parallel to it. It begins with a benediction in the orthodox style; in Dāmodara's recension it is set forth within the reasonable limit of five verses, but in Madhusūdana it is prolonged and elaborated into thirteen verses, a number which is unique in Sanskrit drama. There is no *prasīlavānā* or prologue, but in Madhusūdana there is the usual stage-direction *nāndyante sūtradhārah*, followed by one verse of *prarocanā* which says that Hanūmat himself, at the direction of Vālmīki, is the *vaktr* of the piece, which deals with the exploits of Rāma, that the actors are all well versed in their art, and that the audience consist of men of culture,—“rejoice therefore, O sedate audience, I shall narrate the story of the Rāmāyaṇa”.<sup>1</sup> The actual drama does not yet begin, but we have some narrative verses, four in Dāmodara and six in Madhusūdana, which speak of king Daśaratha, his three queens, his four sons, Rāma's visit to Viśvāmitra's hermitage and his early exploits, thus carrying the story rapidly down to the arrival of Rāma at Mithilā. There is no agreement between the two recensions with regard to these preliminary narrative verses, which fact probably indicates their improvised character. Mohanadūsa, commenting on them in Dāmodara's recension, pointedly states: *idānīn kathā-yojanāya vyākhyā-kyd ālmanāḥ sloka-catusṭayām avatārayati*. To say that the *vyākhyākyt* refers to the commentator or the redactor would be meaningless; it

<sup>1</sup> तामिके उपादेकाह रत्याम अह रक्ता हनुमान् कपिः  
क्री-रामाया राघुद्राहस्या चरितां साम्यां वायां नारदाभः ।  
गोप्ति तारु याः समास-सुमानाः-सांखेना सांखेषित  
तद द्विद्वये कुरुता प्रमदोऽस्तु रक्तामि रामायानम् ॥

In Kālikṛṣṇa Deva's edition the reading is *saubhāyāḥ* (and not *śaubhāyāḥ*) but this is clearly a quaint misprint due to the similarity of the Devanāgarī letters श and श. Lüders, however, accepts this reading and finds in it a reference to the Saubhikas. This is really an instance of misplaced ingenuity. The other three printed editions of M's version as well as the eight MSS we have consulted read *saumyāḥ*. We agree with Winteritz (*ZDMG*, lxxiv, p. 142, fn. 3) and Keith (*op. cit.*, p. 272, fn. 1) that *saumyāḥ* is the correct reading, which is also accepted by the commentator Candraśekhara. Rāmatāraṇa Śiromāṇi in his edition of the work explains it as *abhīnaya-paṇḍitāḥ*, Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgara as *śobhāmāḥ* *kusalā iti yāvत्*.—In giving an analysis of Madhusūdana's version here, we are following Jīvānanda's text which is the longest version of this recension.

probably means the person who explains, as the *adhikārin* or *yātrāwālā* does in a *yātrā*, the narrative parts to the audience and thus carries on the thread of the story.

In Madhusūdana we have, after this, five verses uttered by Vaitālikas as Rāma enters Mithilā, which panygerise the hero and his early exploits, but some of which are borrowed from plays like the *Prasanna-rāghava*. In these *vaitālika-vākyas*,<sup>1</sup> which are fairly frequent, one is naturally reminded of the chorus-like songs (still a feature of Bengali *yātrās*) of the popular *yātrās*, which often mark an important incident or the end and commencement of an episode. In Dāmodara's recension verses of this kind are not mentioned as *vaitālika-vākyas*, but the narration is anonymous, or at best imagined (as Wilson puts it) to be spoken by an indifferent person or the poet; it is highly probable that they were uttered by the director of the performance or his assistant chorus. Then follows the episode of the breaking of Śiva's bow, in which some agreement is noticeable in the verses of the two recensions, and the action is carried on by metrical dialogues between Janaka, Rāma, Sītā (monologues), Lakṣmaṇa and others. After some more narrative verses, which applaud this feat of Rāma but most of which are borrowed from *Mahāvīra-carita*, *Prasanna-rāghava* and other plays, the first Act ends in Madhusūdana, and the second begins with Rāma's encounter with the terrible Paraśurāma, in which the interlocutors include, beside the hero and his rival, Lakṣmaṇa and Dasaratha. All this, however, is comprised in Act I in Dāmodara. The appearance of Paraśurāma is described in several narrative verses put into the mouth of Lakṣmaṇa, and here for the first

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes these verses are put into the mouths of groups of persons like the Pauras (*paura-rākyam*) or even generally *anyeśām aśi* (*anyekyam*), as we find them, e.g., at Rāma's breaking of Śiva's bow, at the commencement of Rāma's exile etc. Such chorus-like songs are still a feature of Bengali *yātrās* and are known in modern times as *juḍir gāṇ*. Long descriptive verses, put throughout under headings like *atha rācūpa-cesṭā*, *atha sītānveseṇe rāma-caritam*, *atha mṛga-caritam*, *atha yuddhopakramāḥ* etc., were probably utilised in this way. In Kālikṛṣṇa's edition of Madhusūdana's version, the editor puts these descriptive and narrative passages (where they are not explicitly assigned to *vaitālikas* or *pauras*) to the Sūtradhāra but this is not warranted by MSS.

time we meet with two prose passages in the heroic strain uttered by Paraśurāma. With some more narrative verses (which are *vaitālika-vākyas* in Madhusūdana) leading to Sītā's marriage, ends (in Dāmodara) Act I, which is entitled *Sītā-svayamvara*. In the course of this we have in Dāmodara (in place of Madhusūdana's *vaitālika-vākyā*) descriptive headings over the narrative verses which are uttered by no one in particular; such as *rāma-nātya-varyanam* (describing how Rāma took Paraśurāma's bow and threw an arrow stopping the latter's passage to heaven), *sītā-nātyam* (describing how on Rāma's drawing Paraśurāma's bow, Sītā was apprehensive that Rāma might be breaking another bow and winning another bride) and finally, *rāma-vivāha-varyanam*, the corresponding verses of which are in part *vaitālikaiḥ paṭhitam* in Madhusūdana.

The second Act in Dāmodara is entirely undramatic, being a highly flavoured erotic description, with occasional *narma-vacana*, of the love-sports of Rāma and Sītā in a strain which may be an offence against decency and the drama, but which is approved in poetry and is in strict conformity with the requirements of a Kāvya. In Madhusūdana this is taken up as a part of Act II, the first half of which describes the episode of Paraśurāma. The third Act, even less dramatic than the first, is mainly descriptive, dealing with the agitation of Kaikeyī, the exile of Rāma, the sorrow of the people and the relatives, Bharata's rebuke of his mother, the residence at Pañcavati and the departure of the two brothers in chase of the false deer. Here in Dāmodara the Act III ends, and the fourth Act begins with the description of the chase, in which we have the gestures of the deer delineated by the well-known verse *grīvā-bhaṅgābhīrāmam* from *Sakuntalā*. This is followed in the same Act (Act III in Madhusūdana and Act IV in Dāmodara) by the appearance of Rāvaṇa, abduction of Sītā, Jaṭāyu's fruitless attempt at rescue, and the story is carried down to Rāma's return after the chase to the deserted hut. In Madhusūdana, as already noted, all these incidents are comprised in the third Act.

It is not necessary to follow up the whole story to the end of this extensive work in the two recensions, for what is given above will be enough to indicate its general character. Before we comment on some of its peculiar features in relation to its

resemblance to the mode of the *yātrā*, we should like to deal with one very interesting point to which Lüders refers but which he presses into the service of his inevitable shadow-play theory. There are throughout the play (especially in Dāmodara's version) elaborate descriptive stage-directions, very unlike the brief and pointed directions usual in Sanskrit plays; and these consist of several lines of florid prose and present a complete picture in themselves. Thus after the death of Rāvaṇa we read : *mandodari sakala-sundara-sundaribhiḥ parivṛtā galadavirala-netra-jala-pravāhaiḥ sītā-pater virahānalena saha laṅkā-patēḥ pratāpānalām nirvūpayanti hāhākāram ghorā-phūlhārāiḥ kurvanī jhaṭiti trikūṭācalād utpatya samara-bhūmau mahā-nidrām gatasya nija-prāṇa-nāthasya laṅkā-patēś carāṇa-kamālayor nipatya*. During the fight between Rāma and Rāvaṇa we have : *taṭrāśoka-vānikā-sthita-vimānām āruhya jānakīm rāma-rāvaṇayor yuddham darśayati trijaṭā saramā ca/ mandodary api sundari-parivṛtā laṅkācalā-śikharam āruhya paśyati/ rudro 'pi samudra-madhye ekena caranenopasthito yuddham paśyati/ devāḥ sarve vimānādhirūḍhā nabho-maṇḍala-gatā yuddham paśyanti*. Very often they are not stage-directions but descriptions which carry forward the narrative. Thus in the account of Rāma's return to Ayodhyā with his newly married bride, the following lines describe Rāma's love-sick condition as a prelude to their love-sports which immediately follow : *sarvalakṣaṇopetān deva-bhūpāla-yogyaṁ medura-mandurāyām turagān avalokya māra-jvarākulita-citto bhrāntyā vadhu-putrayor maṇgalāvalokanāyāgatsya bhagavatas taraṇeḥ kiraṇamālinas turagā īme svabhāva-tejasvinas tal-tāḍanām asoḍhāras tāḍitāḥ punah punar bhagavantām bhāskaram druta-gatyāstācalām nayantu iti buddhvā dāśarathir janaka-putrī ca dāṇḍāghātais turagāṁs tāḍayāmāsa/ niśāyām prauḍhāyām sīghram āvayoh saṅgamo-bhavatu ity abhiprāyah*. This clumsy passage is really an expansion of the idea contained in the previous verse (Dāmodara ii. 1). In Madhusūdana,<sup>1</sup> there is a fairly long prose passage which would cover two printed pages and therefore too long for quotation here, in which Rāma's search after Sītā and his sorrow are described in the familiar style of the Sanskrit prose romances. Lüders maintains that these lines of descriptive prose are really portrayals which correspond to the so-called

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Jīvānanda Vidyāśāgara, Calcutta 1890, pp. 165-170.

*Janturan* of the Javanese shadow-play, which is sung with the accompaniment of muffled music; and from this he would infer that the scenery in the old Indian drama was delivered in a similar way.

Apart from the fact, which is ignored by Lüders, that some of these descriptive passages are not stage directions, it may be pointed out that, whatever may be the value of the parallel drawn from Java, the same feature is certainly noticeable in the *Citra-yajñā* described by Wilson. Thus, at the end of the first Act of this play, the stage-direction, according to Wilson,<sup>1</sup> is : "Dakṣa bows down at the feet of the gods, and puts the dust from under them upon his head, after which he propitiates them fully in the spoken dialect, and then proceeds to the place of sacrifice, reading or reciting the usual formulas, and followed by the *Rṣis*." Now this *Citra-yajñā*, which is described as a drama in five Acts dealing with the legend of Dakṣa, is undoubtedly a modern work belonging to the commencement of the 19th century, but it has many striking points of similarity with the *Mahānāṭaka*. The dialogue is curiously imperfect, being left to be supplied in the course of the performance. Passages of narrative are often interspersed with dialogues and elaborate stage-directions, and the work has little pretension to a dramatic character. Wilson rightly notes that it is a valuable example of the manner of the *yātrās* which follow a somewhat similar plan. But Wilson is hardly correct in his conjecture that the *yātrā*, which has through ages an unbroken tradition independent of the literary drama, and which makes still less pretension to a literary character, follows the plan of such plays as the *Citra-yajñā*; on the contrary, such late Sanskrit plays, written for some popular festival, seem to make concessions to popular taste by adopting some of the peculiar features of the *yātrā* of popular origin. The lengthy stage-directions made up the want of scenic apparatus in a *yātrā*, as in a play of this type; while the elaborate descriptive and narrative passages were recited with a flourish by the *adhikārin* or director of the performance, who in this wise unfolds and sometimes explains the tenor of the play to the audience. Such highly florid prose passages are also a notable feature of the *Kathakatā* in Bengal,

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

which is another mode of popular entertainment allied to the *yātrā* and the *pāmcāli*. Examples of such passages, which became stereotyped as "set passages" in later times, will be found in Dinesh Chandra Sen's *History of Bengali Language and Literature*,<sup>1</sup> and we have some specimens of these in the Dacca University MSS collection. D. C. Sen thus comments on these passages : "There are formulas which every *hathaka* has to get by heart, set passages describing not only Śiva, Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa and other deities, but also describing a town, a battle-field, morning, noon and night and many other subjects which incidentally occur in the course of the narration of a story. These set passages are composed in Sanskritic Bengali with a remarkable jingle of consonants, the effect of which is quite extraordinary." It is not known whether the *yātrā* adopted the plan from the Kathakas, who may be regarded as the descendants of the old Granthikas, or *vice versa*; but it is probable that it was a peculiar feature of most of these forms of popular entertainments, and we need not go out of our way in assuming that it had a direct connexion with the shadow-play, of which the Indian tradition knows nothing.

Information about the *yātrās* of old times is rather meagre, but what little we know and what we can surmise about them from the specimens of comparatively later times confirm our conjecture that compositions like the *Mahānāyaka* should be explained in relation to the *yātrā* to which it bears a distinct kinship.<sup>2</sup> The name *yātrā* suggests that it might have been originally some kind of religious procession, by which term it is often rendered;<sup>3</sup> but we have evidence to shew that in historical times it was some kind of operatic and melodramatic presentation, in which improvisation played a considerable part. Its traditional existence is known to us from time immemorial, and there is no valid reason to doubt that it probably descended from earlier festive popular entertainments of a religious character.<sup>4</sup> It is not known whether

<sup>1</sup> Calcutta 1911, pp. 586-87, fn.

<sup>2</sup> It must be noted that it bears no kinship to the spectacular Rāmāyāna which prevails in the upper provinces.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lévi, *op. cit.*, p. 394; Caland, *Een onbekend Indisch Tooneelstuk* (*Gopāla-keli-candrikā*), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of the Bengali *yātrā* and its early history, see S. K. De, *Bengali Literature 1800-1825*, Calcutta 1919, pp. 442-54. Dinesh

the *yātrā* had any direct connexion with the literary drama, but it is probable that it was a continuation of an old type, while it is a fact that it survived the decadence of the regular drama into which it never developed, and that its even tenor of existence was hardly ever modified in form or spirit by any literary pretensions. The principal elements of the old *yātrā* seem to be of indigenous growth, peculiar to itself, and there is no evidence to shew that these elements, which have survived in a rough way through ages, had anything to do with the theory and practice of the literary drama. Its religious and mythological theme, no doubt, raises a presumption of its kinship with the Sanskrit drama, but it really points to a probable connexion with religious festivities of a popular character. It is true that a dramatic element always existed, but the operatic and melodramatic peculiarities prevailed over the dramatic. The religious pre-occupation of these festive entertainments expressed itself naturally in song, or in recitative poetry which could be chanted, and this choral peculiarity threw into shade whatever mimetic qualities they possessed. Although the realities of scenery and character were not totally ignored, there was little dialogue, still less action, and hardly any analysis or development of character. Every representation was concerned primarily with the gradual unfolding of an epic or paurāṇic theme, a simple story often perfectly well-known to the audience; but the performance was necessarily slow and elaborate, the session sometimes occupying more than one day, because description, recitation or singing was given preference to mere action and dialogue. There was no scenic apparatus, and even no regular scene-division, which appears to have been introduced much later from the Sanskrit or English drama; and all the details were left to the imagination of the audience, the *Yātrāwālā* or his chorus or some individual character sketching, explaining and commenting (by means of elaborate descriptive passages in verse and prose) on

Chandra Sen's account (*op. cit.*, pp. 724f.), as well as that given by Nishikanta Chattopadhyaya (*The Yātrās or the Popular Dramas of Bengal*, London 1882). This last account is based chiefly on the works of Kṛṣṇakamal Gosvāmin who wrote pseudo-literary *yātrās* about 1870-75 A.D., and therefore deals with fairly late specimens, which are not entirely free from the influence of English or anglicised theatre in Bengal.

the outlines of the narrative, which was eked out by the principal characters in metrical or choral dialogues. Some of these dialogues, as well as most of the chorus songs, were composed and learnt by heart beforehand; but they must also have been developed considerably by improvisation. Wilson compares the *yātrā* to the Improvvista Commedia of the Italians, the business alone being sketched by the author, the dialogues supplied by the actors and the narrative details explained by the Yātrāwālā or his chorus. The Yātrāwālā, unlike the Sūtradhāra who sets the play in motion and then retires, was an important figure in the old, if not in the modern, *yātrā*; for he not only controlled and directed the performance but was always in appearance, supplying the links of the story by means of the descriptive and narrative passages, explaining and expanding it with the help of his chorus, the actors making their appearance just to impart enough verisimilitude by their presence and their metrical dialogues. It was his show and he was the show-master. It is also important to add that there was in the old *yātrā* an exclusive preponderance of songs or recitative poetry, in which even the dialogues were carried on and the whole action worked out. In comparatively modern *yātrās*, no doubt, secular themes are admitted; the details of the story are more minutely and faithfully followed; there are less music and poetry and more dialogue and dramatic interest; and even lively interludes of a farcical nature are introduced to relieve their seriousness and monotony.<sup>1</sup> But even these improvements made of late years could not altogether lift the *yātrā* out of its religious envelopment and its essentially poetic or musical structure.

If we bear these characteristics in mind, it will not be difficult to see that a work like the *Mahānāṭaka* approximates very closely to this type. The religious or mythological theme of this work, its epic or narrative character, the imperfection of its dialogues, its descriptive passages interspersed with elaborate and vivid stage-directions, its chorus-like *visitālikavākyas*, its length and extended working out of the story,—all these peculiarities find a natural explanation when we consider

<sup>1</sup> At the present day, the Bengali *yātrā* is being entirely moulded by the anglicised Bengali drama and theatre, and is therefore departing completely from the older type.

that these are also the prominent features of the *yātrā*. As the imperfect dialogues and narrative passages were frequently supplemented, it is not surprising that a work meant for such performance increased in bulk, incorporating into itself fine poetic passages from various sources, and different versions came into existence.

Pischel has already made a very significant remark with reference to the *Dūtāngada* that "there are almost as many *Dūtāngadas* as there are manuscripts". This remark applies with greater force to the *Mahānāṭaka*. The two recensions of Dāmodara and Madhusūdana have already been distinguished; but there is a great deal of discrepancy in the different MSS and printed editions with regard to the number of verses and Act-division in each of the recensions. Unfortunately most of the existing catalogues of MSS give us little information on this point, for they seldom are so painstaking as to collate the different MSS or compare them with the printed editions and register the differences. But in some cases these have been noted and interesting facts have been brought to light. In one MS of Dāmodara's recension, which contains the commentary of Balabhadra, the colophon to the commentary at the end speaks of the fifteenth prakāśa,<sup>1</sup> which makes it probable that this version contained fifteen, instead of the usual fourteen Acts.<sup>2</sup> Similarly in MS, preserved at the India Office,<sup>3</sup> of Madhusūdana's recension, the last Act (IX), which is one of the longest, is divided into two, thus giving us ten Acts, probably in conformity with the Sāhitya-darpaṇakāra's prescription that a *mahānāṭaka* should contain ten Acts. With regard to the number of verses, the MSS vary considerably. According to Lüders<sup>4</sup> the Bombay edition of Dāmodara's

<sup>1</sup> iti.....śribalabhadreṇa vīracitāyāṁ śri-hanūmannāṭaka-dipikāyāṁ pañcadaśaḥ prakāśaḥ (Bhandarkar, Report 1883-84, p. 358). Kielhorn (Catalogue of MSS in the Central Provinces, Nagpur 1874, p. 76) gives the number of slokas in this version of Balabhadra as 2654 ! In another version by Nārāyaṇa the number is given as 1760 !

<sup>2</sup> One of the concluding verses of Dāmodara's recension (xiv. 15) tells us that the number 14 was adopted on the analogy of the fourteen worlds. It was thus apparently an artificial division.

<sup>3</sup> Tawney and Thomas, Catalogue of Two Collections of Skt. MSS at the India Office, p. 36. With this arrangement, the majority of Dacca University MSS of Madhusūdana's recension agree.

<sup>4</sup> Op. cit., p. 705, footnote 5.

recension, published<sup>1</sup> in *Saka* 1786, gives 582 verses; but the Bombay edition (Venkatesvara Press) of *Saka* 1831, which we use, gives a total 578 verses. Eggeling's three MSS at the India Office<sup>2</sup> give 588, 570 and 611 verses respectively. Keith<sup>3</sup> gives the number in an Oxford MS as 557. The Bodleian MS noticed by Aufrecht<sup>4</sup> contains 548 verses, and on comparison of this MS with the Bombay edition of *Saka* 1831, it is found that the discrepancies occur in Acts I, III, V, VI, VIII, IX-XIV. The same kind of discrepancy is also noticeable in the two fragments noticed by Weber.<sup>5</sup> The following table will make the differences clear :

Act	Bombay ed. of 1831 <i>Saka</i>	Aufrecht	Weber (fragment)	Weber (fragment)
I	58	52	51	51
II	30	30	34	32
III	27	26	30	26
IV	16	16	16	17
V	64	59	—	60
VI	46	45		48
VII	20	20		18
VIII	58	55		—
IX	41	40		
X	24	24		
XI	41	42		
XII	19	17		
XIII	38	35		
XIV	96	87		

What is said here of the recension of Dāmodara applies with equal force to that of Madhusūdana. Aufrecht's Bodleian MS gives 720 verses; but we have eight MSS of this recension in the Dacca University collection which do not agree with this MS, nor with each other, with regard to the distribution and total number of verses. The published editions of this recension will also bear out this point. The early edition of Mahā-

<sup>1</sup> Ed. with the comm. of Mohanadīsa in Puthi size (fol. 93), Bombay 1864.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, vii, pp. 1583f.

<sup>3</sup> Keith, *Catalogue of MSS in the Indian Institute at Oxford*, p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> *Bodleian Catalogue*, p. 142a.

<sup>5</sup> *Berlin Catalogue*, I, p. 163 (no. 562); II, i, p. 157 (no. 1568).

rājā Kālikṛṣṇa Deva Bāhādur (Calcutta 1840) need not be taken as authoritative, for the editor confesses in his prefatory verses that he has inserted the stage-directions, the titles of scenery etc., and it is not clear if he has followed any particular MS or groups of MSS for his edition. This edition<sup>1</sup> gives, according to the editor's own numbering, a total of 613 verses. The edition of Rāmatāraṇa Śiromāṇi, published with his own commentary (Calcutta 1870), is based (as the editor states) on two printed texts and 9 or 10 MSS, but it notes few variants and the text is frankly eclectic. It follows generally, however, the commentator Candraśekhara's text and gives a total of 730 verses. In the edition published by Candrakumāra Bhāṭṭācārya, which contains the ḥikā of Candraśekhara (Calcutta 1874), we have in all 734 verses. Finally, the edition of Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgara with his own commentary (Calcutta 1890), which does not appear to have utilised any MS but only uncritically copies the printed editions (chiefly that of Rāmatāraṇa Śiromāṇi), as well as draws verses from Dāmodara's version, contains the largest total of 788 verses. The distribution of verses in the different Acts may be shown in a table thus :

Act	Kālikṛṣṇa	Rāmatāraṇa	Candrakumāra	Jīvānanda
I	43	47	48	59
II	46	52	52	63
III	85	88	89	94
IV	73	72	72	80
V	79	103	100	111
VI	111	111	116	114
VII	58	72	72	80
VIII	20	37	37	38
IX	98	148	148	149
Total	613	730	734	788

Although Dāmodara and Madhusūdana appear to have

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that this edition omits the end-verse to each Act which speaks of Madhusūdana as the redactor; but in the prefatory remarks the editor speaks of Madhusūdana as such, and this leaves no doubt that he followed this recension. For the number and order of the verses in the Dacca University MSS of this recension, see Appendix to the original article in *HHQ*, vii, 1931 (not reprinted here) pp. 571ff.

made a final redaction of the work, it is clear that even each of their recensions was in a state of flux. The respective Act-division is more or less kept intact in each recension (with just two exceptions already noted); but there was considerable addition or omission of the constituent verses in each Act. This fate the *Mahānāṭaka* doubtless shares with many other Sanskrit plays, of which different recensions exist; yet with the exception perhaps of the erotic elaboration of Act III of *Sakuntalā* and the irregular Act IV of the *Vikramorvāsiya*, the extent of interpolation or omission in the text is never so great as we find it in the *Mahānāṭaka*; for here we have of each recension practically as many versions as there are manuscripts. This fact makes it probable that the work was utilised for some form of performance in which the descriptive passages could be eked out at will, so that within the fixed outline of the accepted redactions, verses were added or omitted to suit the performance, the performers or the audience, just in the same way as the regular plays were adapted to the requirements of stage-acting, e.g., by the Cakkyars of Malabar.

Further interesting light is thrown on the question by eight Bengal MSS of the work, which give us a version not associated with the name of Madhusūdana and which appear to confirm our conjecture regarding the origin and character of the *Mahānāṭaka*. These MSS do not entirely agree with each other in their texts, some being very short and others comparatively long; but taken together there is a substantial agreement, which gives us a version which may be called the *textus simplicior*, as distinguished from the *textus ornatus* of Madhusūdana. The finally redacted recension of Madhusūdana, which came to prevail in Bengal and which was doubtless based on some such simpler version, regularised the work into the semblance of a drama, but these MSS tell us a different story.

We have given<sup>1</sup> a part of the text edited from these MSS,

<sup>1</sup> The text was published along with this article in *IHQ*, vii, 1931, 571-626. It is too long to be reprinted here. With our conclusions here A. Esteller in his *Die älteste Recension des Mahānāṭaka* (Leipzig 1936) does not entirely agree. He wants to show that Dūmodara's recension is the earliest and the Madhusūdana redacted a rather disorderly text in a coherent form.

in parallel columns with the corresponding portion of the text of Madhusūdana (Acts I and II) as we find it in its longest version in Jīvānanda's edition. A detailed comparison between the two would be interesting. In Madhusūdana, we have at the commencement, 13 benedictory verses (which number appears as 10 in the texts of Rāmatāraṇa and Candraśekhara<sup>1</sup> respectively); but in the majority of our MSS this pseudo-nāndī is kept within the reasonable limits of 4 or 5 verses. The *prarocanā*-verse, which names Hanūmat as the author, as well as the direction *nāndyante sūtradhāraḥ*, is omitted in our MSS and this is obviously an after-thought of Madhusūdana's as we do not find it also in Dāmodara's version. Curiously enough, our MSS give here an indication of the gradual process of accretion and expansion. The two MSS marked A and D incorporate a large number of verses of a narrative or descriptive character from different sources, the latter specially interpolating more than once a large number of verses stringed together from the *Anargha-rāghava* and the *Prasanna-rāghava*. The verse next following the benediction affords an example of this process of amplification which must have already been in existence when Madhusūdana took up the work. This verse (no. 6) is not uttered by any actor but narrates the beginning of the story by telling us all about Daśaratha, his three queens and four sons and corresponds to verses 15-16 of Madhusūdana. But this verse is amplified in four of our MSS by the addition of another verse which is clearly an imitation of the first, while one MS adds some more verses thereafter with the heading *Rāma-cariṭam*. After this, all the MSS (with the exception of three) plunge directly into the plot by going straight to the episode of the *Sītā-svayamvara*, omitting Rāma's early exploits narrated by Madhusūdana, but alluding to these exploits in the opening verse uttered by the Maithila Vaitālikas, who welcome Rāma on his arrival at Mithilā. The episode is briefly sketched in rough outline, and is not such an elaborate affair as it is in Madhusūdana. Śatānanda speaks in one verse (borrowed from *Bāla-rāmāyaṇa* iii. 27) of Janaka's vow; Sītā is apprehensive in the next; and Lakṣmaṇa follows up in two more

<sup>1</sup> Candraśekhara comments on this: *nātakे śloka-trayena śloka-drayeva vā nādī kriyate.....mahānātakे tu nāyāḥ niyama iti bahubhīḥ ślokair nāndīḥ karoti.*

verses as Rāma takes up Siva's bow. The episode is then rounded off by a *vaitālika-vākya* again, which applauds in six or seven verses the feat of breaking the bow, which is further praised by the Pauras and by Lakṣmaṇa in single verses respectively. After this come four more verses uttered again by the Vaitālikas, which describe Rāma's marriage and return to Ayodhyā. It is not necessary to follow up the analysis of the text further, for this rapid account of what corresponds to the first Act in Madhusūdana's recension and what contains no prose, little action but much more *Vaitālika-vākya*, and takes up only 24 verses as against Madhusūdana's 59, will give a rough idea of the general character of this simpler version.

In this connexion attention may be drawn to several points. In the first place, these MSS give us a shorter and much simpler text, in which the story is sketched in bare outline without any amplification of matters of details. Secondly, the *prarocanā*-verse, as well as the verse which occurs at the end of each Act and names Hanūmat as the author and Madhusūdana as the redactor, is to be found in none of our eight MSS, and there is nowhere any mention of Madhusūdana or the fact of his having redacted the work. Nor is there in these MSS any verse or any indication which associates the work with Hanūmat. Thirdly, the stage-directions are generally very simple and take the form of brief indications like *atha lakṣmaṇa-vākyam*, *atha sītā-manasi paribhāvanam*, *atha vartmani paraburāma-darśanam* etc. There is also throughout no Act-division, and the work is presented as a continuous whole without any break of Acts or scenes. This is an important fact, which obviously shews that the work was meant for some kind of continuous performance like the *yātrā*, which knew of no Act or scene division. We are told at the end of each Act in Madhusūdana's recension that it was Madhusūdana, who arranged the work in the form of a *sāmdarbha* (*miśra-bṛī-madhusūdanena kavīnā sāmdarbhya sajjīkṛte* etc.). With our new material it would not be unreasonable to surmise that originally the work existed, as we find it in our MSS, in the form of a continuous narrative piece furnished with metrical dialogues, which, however, were hardly dramatic and curiously imperfect, being left to be supplied in the course of the performance; and that later on Madhusūdana redacted some such earlier version and gave it

a semi-dramatic form by regular Act-division, stage-directions and some prose, and filled out the dialogues and the narrative and descriptive passages more elaborately. It must also be noted that these MSS mark quite distinctly the *Kaitālika-vākyas* or *Paura-vacanas*, in which long recitative poems (which were doubtless meant for singing) were put in the mouths of groups of persons, commenting on an incident or enlarging upon a theme; and there can hardly be any doubt that these were employed in the same way as the chorus-songs in a *yātrā*, which punctuated the performance in a similar manner. It is further important to note that in our MSS the prose passages, whether narrative, descriptive or conversational, are entirely omitted, a fact which is in keeping with the almost entirely choral or recitative character of the old *yātrā*.<sup>1</sup> It cannot be said that these prose passages are frequent or numerous in the two accepted recensions of Dāmodara and Madhusūdana, but whatever prose there is, it must have been added (in deference partly to the actual practice of the *Kathaka* and the *Yātrāwālā*) in later times when the recensions were finally redacted, so as to impart the semblance of a dramatic composition to the work.<sup>2</sup>

The features noted above are really remarkable and highly significant; and from what has been said in the foregoing pages there is no special reason to doubt that, at least in Bengal, a simpler version of the work existed, of which the tradition is recorded in these eight MSS, and which, to all appearance, bears a strong kinship, in general character and structural

<sup>1</sup> The erotic elaboration of Act II is entirely omitted in our MSS (with the exception of one MS only, marked F, which places these verses in another context in Act III).

<sup>2</sup> That our MSS are not mere abridgements or summaries of the *Mahānātaka* is clear from fact that we have some other MSS in the collection at the University of Dacca which expressly call themselves *sāmākṣepa-mahānātakam*. It may also be noted in this connection that two of our MSS of the simpler version (marked A and B) bear the same date of copying, viz., Saka 1714 (=A.D. 1792) and appear to have been prepared by the same scribe, Purusottamadeva Sarman. A was procured from Baghia in the district of Faridpur, B from Borai in the district of Bogra. But these two MSS do not appear to have been copied from the same archetype, as A is more elaborate and has a large number of added verses, and C agrees with it more closely than B. The scribe was thus apparently copying at the same time two versions for two of his patrons.—Esteller however, believes this text to be only an abridged version of Madhusūdana's.

similarity, to such works as may have been utilised for popular festive performances of a *quasi-dramatic* nature, in which song and recitation prevailed over real acting and the drama.

That the vernacular *yātrā* reacted on the literary drama at this period admits of little doubt. We have referred to the *Citra-yajña* described by Wilson, although it is a fairly modern work from which deductions for an earlier period would not be safe. Keith really touches upon this solution of the problem when he suggests that works like the *Mahānāṭaka* were composed "in preparation for some form of performance at which the dialogue was plentifully eked out by narrative by the director and the other actors"; and he rightly compares such irregular types with the *Gīta-govinda* of Jaydeva and the *Gopāla-keli-candrikā* of Rāmakṛṣṇa, both of which can be (and in the case of *Gīta-govinda* it actually is) enjoyed as lyrical poems or songs, but which are at the same time capable of *quasi-dramatic* presentation. Had more information about the *yātrā* been available, Keith would probably have seen its close resemblance to these types instead of explaining them with the rather facile conjecture that they were merely literary exercises. In both the *Gīta-govinda* and the *Gopāla-keli-candrikā*, however, we find a sublimated outcome of the simple Kṛṣṇa-*yātrā*, but in the *Mahānāṭaka*-type we have the adaptation of traditional matter for the purpose of such melodramatic and operatic performances. The date of Rāmakṛṣṇa's work is unknown, but it is apparently a late work written in Gujarat. Caland who has edited it (Amsterdam 1917) touches upon (p. 8f) its similarity to the *yātrā*; and its parallel to the *Swāṅg* of North-west India, which, unlike the regular drama, is metrical throughout and in which the actors recite the narrative portions as well as take part in the dialogues, is rightly suggested. But this play in five Acts, with definite stage-directions and elaborate prose and metrical dialogues, is like the *Gīta-govinda*, a highly factitious composition which cannot be classified properly with the type we are considering, although its connexion with the *Mahānāṭaka* is indirectly mentioned in the prologue.<sup>1</sup> Lévi<sup>2</sup> mentions a Tamil version

<sup>1</sup> p. 44, line 29.

<sup>2</sup> op. cit., p. 244.

of the *Sakuntalā* which may be a near enough parallel to our type; and the influence of the popular theatre on the fourth Act of the *Vikramorvaśya* is also probable. To this category may also belong the *Ānanda-latikā* already mentioned, as well as the *Nanda-ghoṣa-vijaya* noticed by Eggeling.<sup>1</sup> This last-named work, also called *Kamalā-vilāsa*, is a semi-dramatic entertainment in five Acts on incidents connected with the *ratha-yātrā* festival (at Puri) and was composed by Śivanārayaṇa Dāsa in honour of his patron Gajapati Narasinha Deva (of Orissa). But all these works, inspite of the undoubtedly influence of entertainments like the *yātrā* on them, can be similarly differentiated. It is indeed difficult to find a work of precisely the same pattern as the *Mahānāṭaka*, which thus stands unique in the whole range of Sanskrit dramatic literature; but its uniqueness makes it an extremely important production which throws, as no other work can, an interesting light on certain phases of development of later Sanskrit drama.

We are now in a position to conclude that the origin of a work like the *Mahānāṭaka* is not to be sought in the far-fetched shadow-play, the existence of which in ancient India is not yet beyond doubt, nor should any inference be made from an obviously late work with regard to the early evolution of the Sanskrit drama. With its highly stylised form the work has nothing primitive about it, nor can it be assigned to a very early period. It has its origin probably at a time when the Sanskrit drama was already on the decline. Such irregular types could at this period come into existence, partly through the influence of such choral and melodramatic performances as the popular *yātrā*, which were now being brought into prominence by the gradual rise of vernacular literature. It is not contended, in the absence of any tradition, that such a pseudo-play was actually enacted as a *yātrā*. It may or may not have been; but it is possible to maintain that such works were not mere literary exercises but were intended for some kind of performance of the type mentioned above. They were, to all intents and purposes, a kind of Sanskrit *yātrā* or were meant as such, composed for a more cultivated audience, who, with the decline and fading popularity of the classical Sanskrit drama, wanted something which would be an analogue to the

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, vii, p. 1806, no. 4190 (607a).

looser yet highly melodramatic and operatic popular entertainments. The anonymity of the work and the existence of different but substantially agreeing versions are points in favour of our view. We can also understand why the work is in the nature of a compilation with just enough nucleus round which borrowed verses could be easily woven.

In conclusion we should like to point out that the *Mahā-nāṭaka* has not yet been critically edited, nor has all the MSS-material for such edition been yet properly utilised; and that such an edition furnishing a critical text or texts, concordance and other relevant data is a desideratum. We hope we have been able to bring into prominence the importance of the work, and the ample material which still exists in MSS for a study of the problems connected with the question of its character and origin. We regret we have had no MSS of Dāmodara's recension to utilise for this monograph, but we suspect from our study of the Bengal versions that the examination of the MSS of the other recension may bring to light fresh data. We are aware of the imperfect character of these studies: we are glad, therefore, that Esteller's more painstaking researches on ampler materials have supplemented and corrected some of our conclusions. The critical edition promised by Esteller has not yet materialised; until that is done, we have thought it fit to reprint our original study, which prompted Esteller to pursue the question further.

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## A REFERENCE TO THE MAHĀNĀṭAKA'

In the *Bhāva-prakāśana* of Śāradātanaya (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. xlv, Baroda 1930), there is an interesting reference to a somewhat peculiar classification of the Nāṭaka said to have been given by an older writer on Dramaturgy named Subandhu; and in this connexion the *Mahānāṭaka* is cited as an illustration of one of the varieties of the Nāṭaka. As Śāradātanaya belonged in all probability to the first half of the 18th century, it would be interesting to draw attention to this reference to the *Mahānāṭaka* in connexion with my previous studies on the subject in the *IHQ*, vii (1931), pp. 537f.

Śāradātanaya informs us that Subandhu classified the Nāṭaka type of Sanskrit drama into five kinds; and from his account it seems that the distinctions rested chiefly upon the Vṛttis and Rasas employed and the peculiar Saṁdhis or dramatic junctures adopted in each. These Saṁdhis correspond to the five generally recognised Saṁdhis of Mukha (Opening or Protasis), Pratimukha (Progression or Epitasis), Garbha (Development or Catastasis), Vimarśa (Pause or Peripetia) and Nirvahana (Conclusion or Catastrophe); but they are differently designated and sometimes differently defined in each case. As Śāradātanaya's summary of Subandhu's classification is merely incidental and necessarily brief, and as some of the plays which are cited as examples of the different kinds are no longer existing, it is not easy to make out the distinctions fully and clearly; but there is enough to indicate generally Subandhu's notion of the character of the different types of the Nāṭaka.

The five classes of the Nāṭaka, in Subandhu's opinion, are respectively called Pūrṇa (Complete), Praśānta (Tranquil), Bhāsvara (Brilliant), Lalita (Sportive) and Samagra (Entire), these names being obviously meant to be descriptive. The Pūrṇa or Complete kind contains all the five orthodox Saṁdhis of Mukha etc, and it is possibly meant to include the usual or normal type of the Nāṭaka. A drama entitled the *Kṛtyārāvanya*, which is known to us only from such incidental references in dramaturgic and rhetorical works, is given as an

example of the Pūrṇa type. The chief characteristic of the Praśānta is that the Quietistic Sentiment or the Praśānta Rasa is abundant (*bhūyiṣṭha*) in it, and the dramatic Vṛtti here, according to Drauhinī, is Sāttvatī. The *Svapna-vāsavadatta* is taken as representing this type. Although the predominant sentiment in such a theme as the story of Udayana and Vāsavadattā would be the Erotic or Śringāra, the Nirveda-Vyabhicārin involved in it is obviously regarded as important enough, being often raised to the relish of the corresponding Praśānta Rasa. This type of the Nāṭaka also contains five Saṁdhis, respectively called Nyāsa, Nyāsa-samudbheda, Bijokti, Bija-darśana and Anuddiṣṭa-saṁhara. These are not clearly defined, but they are illustrated by means of the different episodes of the play which is cited as a typical specimen. The Nyāsa and Nyāsa-samudbheda apparently correspond to Mukha and Pratimukha, but the idea as well as the designation is obviously deduced from the opening episodes of the *nyāsa* or deposit of Vāsavadattā and its consequence in the illustrative play itself. The Bijokti appears to consist of the episode of the hero's anxious repetition of the heroine's name on half-recognition (*utkāñjhi-tena sodvegam bījoktir nāma-kīrtanam*), like "Come, O Vāsavadattā, where, where are you going" (*ehi vāsavadatte kva kva yāśīty ādi dṛṣyate*). The Bija-darśana is the natural development of this episode and consists of the mutual search of the hero and the heroine, who are indeed thrown together but who are still without access to each other (*sahāvasthiśayor eka-prāptyānyasya gaveṣaṇam*). But the last Saṁdhi, the Anuddiṣṭa-saṁhāra, seems to consist of nothing more than the mere non-mention, at the end of the drama, of the usual prefatory words to the Bharata-vākyā viz., *kim te bhūyah priyāḥ kuryām*.

In the Bhāsvara Nāṭaka, of which the *Bāla-rāmāyaṇa* is taken as typical, the dramatic Vṛtti is Bhāratī and the sentiments prescribed are the Heroic (*Vīra*) and Wonderful (*Abhūta*). The five Saṁdhis in it are called respectively Mālā, Nāyaka-siddhāṅga, Glāni, Parikṣaya and Mātrāvaśiṣṭa-saṁhāra, all of which again are deduced from an analysis of the particular illustrative play. The Mālā consists of the opposing of the well reputed hero by an equally powerful rival (*Pratipakṣa*), but the example cited is not that of Rāma and Rāvaṇa, but, curiously enough, that of Candragupta and Candana. The

next Saṁdhi occurs when the object of the rival hero is for the time being fulfilled by practising deception on the hero, as in the case of Rāvaṇa's employment of Mārīca. The description of the Glāni Saṁdhi is not clear, but it appears to consist of the attainment of partial success by the hero; for the illustration given is the episode of the surrounding of Laṅkā by the Monkey-host after crossing the ocean. The Parikṣaya occurs when there is a partial setback through temporary overpowering of the hero, such as the episode of the binding of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa by Nāga-pāśa. The somewhat clumsily named last Saṁdhi of the Bhāsvara type of the Nāṭaka is also not defined, but it is described, with the example of the fire-ordeal of Sītā, as the testing of the heroine who had been imprisoned by the enemy after the dénouement of the enemy's destruction.

The dramatic Vṛtti in the Lalita type of the Nāṭaka is Kaiśiki, and the only permissible sentiment is the Erotic or Śringāra. An unknown *Urvāśi-vipralambha*, which probably closely followed Kālidāsa's well known Troṇaka on the same theme, is cited as an example of this kind. The five Saṁdhis are respectively named Vilāsa, Vipralambha, Viprayoga, Viśodhana and Uddiṣṭārthopa-saṁhāra, the nomenclature being obviously derived from that of the different stages or aspects of the course of Love as a sentiment. The Vilāsa is the episode of the erotic enjoyment of the hero suitable to the various seasons (e.g., Vasantotsava). The Vipralambha is separation of the young couple, which may be either voluntary or may occur through jealousy. The Viprayoga consists of involuntary separation, through curse etc., of a temporary character. The Pariśodhana is the removal of a stain or obloquy, such as Rāma's purification of Sītā by fire-ordeal. It is curious to note, however, that the illustrations of these four kinds of Saṁdhis in the Lalita Nāṭaka are drawn not from the illustrative play, *Urvāśi-vipralambha*, but by a reference to some incidents in the stories of Vatsarāja, Yayāti and Rāma. The last Saṁdhi, Uddiṣṭārthopa-saṁhāra, however, refers directly to the story of Urvāśi, and is said to consist of such happy conclusion as indicated by the message of Indra to Urvāśi permitting her to remain on earth as a wife to Purūravas.

The fifth kind of the Nāṭaka, viz. the Samagra, is rather

vaguely defined. It is said to possess all the dramatic *Vṛttis* fully developed (*sarva-vṛtti-viniśpannam*) and all the technical *Nāṭaka-lakṣaṇas* (*sarva-lakṣaṇa-saṅhyutam*), but these are formal requirements of a somewhat conventional nature. The *Mahānāṭaka* is cited as an example of this kind, but it is not shown how far this play conforms to the requirements of the definition. As a matter of fact, Śāradātanaya does not think it necessary to devote more than one short stanza or two lines to this type of the *Nāṭaka*, and it is not clear in what way the *Mahānāṭaka* can be regarded as a representative of this indefinitely defined type of the *Nāṭaka*. But he adds at the conclusion of his treatment that in the *Samagra Nāṭaka* are to be found the various characteristics of all the types of the *Nāṭaka* (*svārūpāṇi dṛṣyante vividhāni ca*). This remark, no doubt, applies in a general way to the *Mahānāṭaka* as we know it, which is chiefly a compilation from different known and unknown Rāma-dramas; but it does not bring out the essential character of the play itself. It is also difficult from the meagre account to conclude with confidence that the present *Mahānāṭaka* was at all meant by Śāradātanaya or Subandhu. A further remark is added: *natakam nyttacārākhyam* (v. 1. *nyttavārākhyam*) *tat samagram iśritam*; but it is not clear whether this sentence means that the *Samagra* type of the *Nāṭaka* was also known by the name of *Nyttacāra Nāṭaka*, or, as the editor of the *Bhāva-prakāśana* takes it, *Nyttacāra* was the name of a specific play which is also given as an example of the *Samagra Nāṭaka*. At any rate, if the latter interpretation is correct, it does not help us very much, for we have unfortunately no information, here or elsewhere, about this play.

It is clear from the above account that Subandhu's classification has the merit of distinguishing *Nāṭakas* on the basis of their underlying sentiments and employment of dramatic modes; but it can hardly be taken as possessing any great interest or importance from the point of view of Sanskrit dramatic theory. Subandhu is also peculiar in inventing special *Saṅdhis* for his different types; but it appears that these *Saṅdhis* consist of nothing more than certain characteristics deduced from the episodes of some well known dramas, and as such can scarcely be generalised into clearly marked differentiating principles of the employment of dramatic junctures in the *Nāṭaka*.

It is also a pity that Śāradātanaya could not say more about the Samagra type and illustrate it in connexion with the *Mahānāṭaka* which he cites as a typical specimen of this variety. What he actually says is too indefinite to be of any use for conclusions regarding his views about this play. But it is highly probable, even from his meagre account, that the *Mahānāṭaka* known to him was probably different from the drama of the same name which now exists; and even if it be conceded that it were the same, the drama probably existed in a different form in his time, for there is nothing to warrant our taking the extant play as representative of what is conceived to be the Samagra variety of the *Nāṭaka*.

*Ganganath Jha Comm. Volume, 1937.*

WIT, HUMOUR AND SATIRE  
IN  
ANCIENT INDIAN LITERATURE

Although some manifestation of the bizarre and the grotesque may be found in Indian Art and Architecture, one must look to literature for the proper display of Wit, Humour and Satire. But since the earliest Indian literature, comprised in the *Veda*, *Brāhmaṇa*, and *Upaniṣad*, was predominantly religious, ritualistic or speculative in character, there was very little scope for the sparkle of wit or pleasantness of humour. There is, no doubt, a comic side to some of the myths and legends, but to the ancient Indian themselves they never appeared in a fantastic light. It is witty, for instance, in view of Indra's immoderate indulgence in Soma drink, to call the Soma-vats 'the belly of Indra' (*indrodara*), but the exhilaration of Soma partook of a serious religious character. Indra's monologue (*Rg-v.*, x. 119), in which he boasts, apparently under the influence of Soma, of his superior power and greatness, may be amusing as the earliest specimen of inebriate brag-gadocio in literature; but since Indra's cosmic acts are attributed to Soma, such a profane view is out of the question. The curious Frog Hymn (*Rg-v.*, viii-103), in which the croaking frogs in the rainy season are likened to priests chanting at the Soma ritual, or to Vedic students repeating their lessons, is sometimes taken as a raillery or satire on the Brahmins; but it is more properly a *captatio benevolentiae* to the frogs, the great wizards who have the magical power of bringing rain; the simile is for flattery and not for fun, for graphic and not for satiric effect. In the same way, it is misdirected ingenuity which would interpret the well-known, but obscure, Male-Monkey (*Vṛṣākapi*) Hymn (*Rg-v.*, x. 86), in which a favourite monkey is apparently the subject of dispute between Indra and Indrāṇī, as a satire directed against a certain prince and his wife; the coarse language of some of its stanzas is no argument, for such language is not inadmissible in magic spells, especially in those connected with fertility rites.

Scattered throughout Vedic literature we have witty, but

cynical, remarks about wealth and woman. In the *Rg-veda*, for instance, one poet observes that wealth in the form of cows makes even the lean man fat and the ugly handsome (iv. 28.6), and buys the affection of many a maiden (x. 27.12); another attributes the saying to Indra himself that the mind of woman is fickle and her temper ungovernable (viii. 33.12); while *Urvāṣī* herself tries to persuade *Purūravas* that with woman can be no lasting friendship, for their hearts are those of hyenas (x. 95.15). The *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* (i. 10. 1116; iii. 6. 8) describes woman as untruth and classifies her with dice and drink as one of the three chief evils; the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (xiv 1. 1. 32) speaks of woman along with the Śūdra, the dog and the crow, as something wrong; while the *Kāthaka Samhitā* (xxx. 1) alludes sarcastically to her ability to obtain things from her husband by cajolery at night. These observations, meant to be more earnest than jocular, are indeed interesting; for moralising, which underlies all satire, is as a rule foreign to the spirit of the Vedic texts, while such denunciation is a commonplace of later ascetic literature of India which, from the Buddha to Śāṅkara, condemns woman as the gate of hell. There is also some raciness, as well as ferocity, in the unmeasured language of some of the Atharvanic spells and incantations meant for the destruction of enemies in general and co-wives in particular. For driving away worms, tiny fantastical worms in the entrails, in the ribs and in the head, worms that move about in the eyes, in the ears and in the middle of the teeth, there are exorcising spells (*Atharva-veda*, 11. 31; v. 23), which naively speak of them as demoniacal beings, males and females, of many colours, black, white, red and brown, having mothers, brothers and sisters, as well as kings and viceroys! The personified Fever, with its brother Consumption, sister Cough and nephew Herpes, is also imagined (*Atharv.*, v. 22) as a spotty yellow demon and asked not only to go to the enemy tribes, but also to "seek a lascivious Śūdra girl and shake her through and through"! But less savage and more amusing is the spell for inducing sleep (*Atharv.*, iv. 5), in which the lover stealing to his sweetheart at night wishes: "May the mother sleep, may the father sleep, may the dog sleep, may the eldest in the house sleep, may her relations sleep, may the people round about sleep!"

These and other secular hymns, some of which are of a narrative character, as well as short legends in the *Brāhmaṇas*, are indications that contemporaneous with the religious literature of the Veda, there probably existed a profane literature which is now lost, but from which in course of time emerged, on the one hand, the rich collection of tales and fables in the Buddhist and Jaina literature, and on the other, the narrative miscellany of the Epic and *Purāṇa* literature, with their diversified content of inexhaustible legendary and didactic material. This later phase of Indian literature was abundantly developed on the secular side, but it was still elevated in tone and became distinctly moralising in spirit. Perhaps it was no longer hieratic, but in the strict sense it cannot be described as popular literature : it was nearer to the popular mind, but scarcely composed or inspired by the people. There is, therefore, some quaint and racy flavour in the parables and fables, in the popular tales and smaller narratives, but there is no consistent or pervasive expression of the general comic spirit.

The didactic passages, however, are not entirely devoid of witty sayings, quaint similes and clever epigrams. The traditional gnomic wisdom, for instance, is often expressed with a nimble sagacity of apprehension which amuses the fancy. Here is a specimen from the saying of Vidura (*Mbh.*, v. 33. 7), where six kinds of people are enumerated as flourishing on six others : thieves on the heedless, physicians on the diseased, women on the libidinous, priests on the worshippers, kings on the litigants, and wise men on the fools ! With this may be compared the enumeration of 'eight powers' in the *Āṅguttaranikāya* (viii. 27) : crying is the power of the child, weapons are the power of robbers, sovereignty is the power of kings, pride is the power of fools, humility is the power of sages, reflection is the power of scholars, and meekness is the power of ascetics and Brahmans. We have also passages in the lighter vein on the temptations of monastic life, but nothing perhaps surpasses the amusing description, in the Jaina *Sūyagadāmga* (1.4.1.9f ; 2.1f), of the plight of men caught in the snares of women, who make them slaves and drudges, hold the baby, and "wash clothes like a washerman" ! The well-known dialogue also of the canonical *Nijjutti*, which passage is traditionally copied in Vallabhadeva's *Subhāṣitāvali* (no. 2402) and other much later works, shows that

archness of pungent wit could be attained in ridiculing the dubious character of a certain class of Jaina monks :

"O monk, your cloak has many folds". "Yes, it serves me as a net when I catch fish". "You eat fish ?" "I eat them along with my wine". "You drink sweet wine ?" "O yes, with the harlots". "What, you go to harlots ?" "After I have crushed my enemies". "You have enemies then ?" "Only those whose house I rob". "You are a thief, then ?" "Only because of the love of dice". "How, are you a gambler ?" "Am I not, after all, the son of a slave mother ?".

Each age has its folly and foible, which do not escape observation, but the irrepressible desire to reprove or ridicule finds expression in this age chiefly in the didactic admonition of the delightful parables, tales and fables. From remote antiquity religious wisdom favoured the use of parables, generally from a serious motive and not from a mere sense of humour; but very often, as in the case of the well-known *Udāna* parable of the elephant and the blind men, there is considerable wit in making small and familiar things symbolical of great and strange verities. The illustrative tales of common life are perhaps more amusing and more in keeping with the popular *bonhomie* and good humour. The Buddhist *Jātaka* and the Jaina *Kathānaka*, as well as the Epic and the *Purāna*, abound in entertaining little stories of naughty wives and foolish husbands, of clever people trying to outwit one another but generally overreaching themselves, of hopeless fools whom—to quote a memorable phrase of Dryden's—"God for mankind's mirth has made". The beast-fable, closely allied to the parable in its definite didactic motive, has a different kind of humorous appeal in its drollery and mummery of human life, in its looking askance at human nature and depicting it in the palpable hieroglyphics of brute creation. Perhaps the *Rgvedic* Frog Hymn, whatever might have been its object, already recognises a certain kinship between men and beasts; and the *Upaniṣadic* parable (*Chāndogya* Up., 1. 12) of dogs, who search for a leader to howl food for them, goes a step further; but the dogs do not yet bark wisdom nor do the frogs croak humanity. The beast-fable is not yet recognised as a distinct literary genre either in the Epic or in the *Jātaka*, although the beast-motif, in which animals fare better than men, is utilised in

numerous fables for purposes of moral instruction. In the Epic, for instance, we have the old fable of the innocent mice and the crafty cat (found also in the Jātaka); of the clever jackal, the greedy vulture and the dead child at the cremation ground; of the hypocritical flamingo eating up the eggs of deluded birds. In the Jātaka we have a much larger number of diversified fables, for instance, of the money outwitting the crocodile; of the ass in lion's skin; of the cunning crane leading the unsuspecting fishes into pleasant waters and devouring them all, but ultimately receiving punishment from the clever crab; of the wicked jackal bringing about estrangement between two friends, the lion and the bull; of the ox envious of the pig on account of its good food, but becoming wise on learning that the pig is being fattened only for slaughter; of the obstinate donkey who would not move being lured by the eternal feminine; of the jackal all-tooth, riding a lion rampant on the back of two elephants and going to war against the king of Benares, only to be foiled by the cunning of the priest of the king; and so forth. All these undoubtedly suggested the materials out of which the full-fledged beast-fable developed in the *Pañca-tantra* in a more systematic literary form.

The serious narratives of the Epics do not naturally give us a rich harvest of humour. One may perhaps find some grim humour in the Mahābhārata conception of the son of Dharma as an inveterate gambler and clever casuist, of the lofty teacher of the Gītā as a great diplomat and unscrupulous strategist, or of Draupadi's anger as the pivot on which the terrible family-feud and wholesale carnage turned; but one cannot justly regard such aspects as expressions of the comic spirit. In the smaller narratives and legends there is nothing more than a little rough and racy flavour, occurring here and there only incidentally, for instance, in the legend of Nahuṣa becoming Indra overnight and yoking the divine ascetics to his chariot; in the story of the two wives of his worthy son Yayāti, who in his old age had youthful inclinations; in the description of the naive Rṣyaśringa seduced by the experienced courtesan; or in the recasting of the old Vedic legend of the rejuvenation of decrepit Cyavana for the sake of the youthful Sukanyā. In the more refined and poetical *Rāmāyaṇa* even, such instances are not rare. We have the story of the child Hanūmat

jumping at the sun because his mother instructed him to eat red fruit, the smashing of his body by the Sun's kick and subsequent piecing together of his dismembered limbs; the description of Kumbhakarṇa's enormous meal or Hanūmat's long tail which created havoc at Laṅkā, and so forth; but these are very slight and poor specimens of real humour. Some of the narratives are repeated in the Purāṇas, but there they lose whatever rough-hewn facetiousness they have in the Epics.

When we come to what is known as the classical period of Sanskrit literature, which commences roughly with the beginning of the Christian era, we come across a much more diversified literature, which is different in form, matter and spirit from the Vedic or the Epic. With the disappearance of Epic didacticism and Buddhist rigorism, we find the emergence of a new sense of life and its pleasure and a general desire for refinement, beauty and luxury. With increased secularisation and sophistication, traces of wit and humour become more frequent, but the conditions were such that there was no effective evolution of a really humorous literature. The complex and cultured society had undoubtedly many features which could have furnished fair sport for the literary purveyor of fun, but the essentially romantic and sentimental literature which came to prevail, and which had its own standardised theory and practice of art, was precisely the reverse of the humorous. Leaving aside the further developed literature of tales and fables, which had a simpler style and perhaps greater popular appeal, we have for our purpose, only some lighter erotic verses with their verbal wit and humorous fancy, some gnomic stanzas of mocking wisdom, a thin surplus of satiric arabesques of men and manners, some coarse and jocular stories, and a small body of comic writing of the farcical kind. All these have a piquancy of their own; but considering the vast extent of Sanskrit literature, this is indeed a meagre showing. Even if the wit displayed is certainly striking and, to a certain extent, peculiarly Indian, the type of humour that is scantily represented is hardly *sui juris*. The authors are all either poets, dramatists, moralists or story-tellers; there is no need of classifying any one exclusively or outstandingly as a humorist.

The modern reader may feel flattered and think a great deal of his own sense of humour, but he need not presume

that his worthy ancestors necessarily had a stupid time. That they had the disposition and ability to laugh is clear from the diffused and spasmodic specimens, but the conditions were scarcely propitious to humorous literature. There was nothing wrong with the Indian genius, which could achieve brilliant success in poetry, drama and certain forms of fiction, but there was something wrong in the way in which the Indian literary mind evolved and the Indian author was expected to behave. Although there was at its start no limitation of form, and the immense funds of legends, as well as the unlimited diversity of life was open to it, Sanskrit literature from the beginning appears to have been sequestered for the study or for cultured society, which was not quite the best nourishing soil of wider human interest and intercourse. It had little, therefore, of the *gaieté de cœur*, the broad and joyous popular exuberance, its robust good sense, its simplicity, directness and freedom ; the literature was lofty, exclusive, refined and cultivated. It was composed for an urban and sophisticated audience, and had its own system of phraseology, its own set of imageries and conceits, and its own refinement of emotional analysis. In course of time its stylistic elegancies and sentimental subtleties must have spread down and reached the masses, and there is no reason to suppose that their appreciation was always restricted to a privileged circle. But when the really creative stage had subsided, there was greater respect for texts and traditions and less universality of natural appeal. The literature receded further from common life and common realities, and became predominantly a product of remote and recondite fancy. This complacent literary attitude falls in with the placid view of Sanskrit Poetics, which distinguishes the actual world from the world of poetry, insists upon a super-normal or super-individual realisation of artistic emotion, and rules out personal passion or a direct mirroring of life. It is for this reason that the delineation of heightened poetic sentiment in a more or less affected poetic diction becomes important—even disproportionately important—in the idealised poetic creation, and a secondary or even nominal interest is attached to the realities of theme and character. The tendency is towards the finical rather than the robust, towards the ornate rather than the grotesque, towards harmonious roundness

rather than jagged angularity. In this distinct cleavage between life and literature, between art and experience, there could be no breezy contagion of wit and humour as an over-spreading or distinct stylistic quality.

And yet the spring of humour did not become entirely dry in the earlier classical poets; it bubbles and sparkles in unexpected ease and geniality. The earliest known Kāvya-poet, the ascetic Aśvaghoṣa, is too earnest in poetically expounding his noble doctrine to indulge in idle pleasantry, but one may suspect touches of sly humour, as for instance, in the episode of Nanda's ascent to heaven, in which Nanda indignantly repudiates the Buddha's suggestion that the ugly one-eyed shape, seen by them on their way in the Himalayas, may not be less beautiful than the wife for whom Nanda still yearns; while Nanda subsequently avows on reaching heaven, where he sees the heavenly nymphs, that beside these, his wife looks like the wretched ape! With regard to another predecessor of Kālidāsa, it is not clear what Jayadeva means when he speaks of Bhāsa as the laughter (Hāsa) of poetry; but leaving aside the conventional Jester (Vidūṣaka), there are some piquant scenes in the so-called Bhāsa-dramas, such as the scene in the *Avimāraka*, where king Kuntibhoja is too confused to apprehend the tangled facts of relationship disclosed to him, or where in the *Svapna-nāṭaka* Vāsavadattā, with fine dramatic irony, is driven to weave the nuptial garland for Padmāvatī who is going to be the new wife of her husband, or where the new queen Padmāvatī is made to hear, unseen but accompanied by Vāsavadattā, the king's confession, made unawares to the Vidūṣaka, regarding his deeply cherished love for the old queen.

Coming to Kālidāsa, however, we find for the first time a more subtle and delicate sense of humour. His refined poetic sensibility shows a keen realisation of what is agreeable and disagreeable and an intuitive perception of the happiest attitude of things. His humorous imagination, therefore, is something not to be detached from his theme; it lies at the root of his poetic sense of balance and restraint, of his power of tragic pathos, of his warm humanism and many-sided sympathy with life. The direct touches of humour are very rare indeed, but its tone is clear throughout, whether it manifests itself in the maidishly jests of Śakuntalā's companions, or in

the description of the debauched king Agnivarman who, unable to tear himself from the caresses of his women, lazily puts out his royal feet through the window when his loyal subjects entreat his blessed appearance ! The finest example of what Kālidāsa's charming fancy and gentle humour could achieve is to be found in the whole scene of the young ascetic's appearance in Umā's hermitage, his self-confessed volubility, his apparently earnest but good-humoured raillery about Śiva, which evokes a firm rebuke from Umā, leading on to the hermit's revealing himself as the god of her desire to her surprised but agreeable embarrassment. The smile of Kālidāsa's Comic Muse has nothing in common with the loud laughter of the caricaturist or the bitter mirth of the satirist ; it is charged with poetry and kindliness, with the finest romance and the profoundest good sense.

And yet some critics would take Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* as a veiled satire on some royal family of his time, if not on Agnimitra himself. But it is really a light-hearted comedy of court-life, whose key-note is nothing more than the pursuit of pleasant and idle gallantry ; and its trifling with the tender passion is quite in keeping with the breezy outlook of the gay circle which is not used to any profunder view of life. Love in it is a pretty game ; the hero need not be of heroic proportion, he is only a carefree and courteous gentleman on whom the burden of kingly responsibility sits but lightly, and who possesses an amazing capacity for falling in and out of love ; while the heroine need not be anything more than a frail and fragile *ingénue* with only good looks and willingness to be loved by the incorrigible royal lover. One need not wonder, therefore, that while war is in progress in the kingdom, the royal household is astir with the amorous escapades of the somewhat elderly, but youthfully inclined, king. We have polite banter, witty compliments and frivolous philandering, but no satire or caricature appears to have been meant. Kālidāsa was a greater poet than wit ; he played with comedy, but put his strength into poetry. The type of courtly comedy, however, which Kālidāsa standardised in this play, had its peculiar appeal ; but while Harṣa achieved success in it with his two pretty playlets on the amusing amourette of the gay and gallant Udayana, the beau-ideal of Sanskrit legend,

Rājaśekhara banalised it with his two weakly sentimental and timidly poetical imitations. It is a pity that this elegant comedy of courtly intrigue and gallantry could never divest itself of its sentimental and poetical atmosphere, its legendary and fictitious material, its romantic world of fancy for the real world of fashion, to become a full-fledged comedy of manners. It never developed into the genteel comedy, which would have afforded ample hunting ground to wit and humour in the egregious oddities and absurdities, affectations and imbecilities of a meretriciously urbane society.

In this connexion a reference may not be out of place to the *Vidūṣaka* or Jester, who is already known to Vātsyāyana (I. 4, 46), and who figures in these and other romantic comedies as the professional fool. It is possible that the *Vidūṣaka*'s attempts at amusing by his witticisms about his gastronomical sensibilities were originally unavoidable concessions to the groundlings; but much of his wit has lost its flavour which we must believe it once possessed, while most of his oddities became fatuously conventionalised into mere buffoonery. It is unfortunate that the outworn jests of yesterday's literature, like the exposed relics of yesterday's feast, leave us cold to-day, and even repel. It is perhaps an inevitable consequence of working out a particular *genre* to its last shred and coarsest grain; but the truth seems to be that wit is the salt of literature and not its food; and unsupported by other qualities, it seldom survives. The particular type of character could not survive, because the *Vidūṣaka* of Sanskrit drama was of the author's making, and not of nature's. Like the Fool of *King Lear*, he was seldom invested with individuality or even dramatic justification. The only fine exception, where the dry bones of convention are given the flesh and blood of a human being, is perhaps Maitreya of the *Mṛcchakatika*, who is not the common Jester with his gluttony and tomfoolery, but who is a simple-minded, whole-hearted friend with his doglike blundering devotion.

From what has been said above it is clear that whatever might have been the case with the earlier poets, it would be idle to seek traces of wit and humour in the later serious poetry, whose whole cast of thought and style and atmosphere of idealised sentiment were unfavourable, almost fatal, to a desir-

able blending of imagination and reality. The later poetry preferred literary quality to human interest, and reposed with complacency on the pedantic and the far-fetched. It evolved its fixed principles and patterns, its literary etiquette regarding what to say and how to say it, and its stabilised poetic diction as the proper uniform of poetry. The poets were profoundly learned and cultured men, but their genius was too sane and orderly; and whatever their *forte* might have been, it was not playful trifling. When they attempt it, as Śrīhara does in the episode of Dama's feast (*Naisadha*, xvi), it is steeped in excessive eroticism and disfigured by unhesitatingly introduced vulgar innuendoes in what is supposed to be witty repartee of cultured society. The sense of relative proportion, without which there can be no sense of the ridiculous, becomes rare, and poets think nothing of obvious exaggeration and extravagance. The poetic frenzy, which describes the eyes of maidens as compendious oceans or arms of men as capable of uprooting the Himalayas, is delightfully hyperbolic, but the poet is funny without meaning to be so.

This tendency to exaggeration and over-elaboration reaches its climax in the gorgeously ornamented Prose Kāvya, which deals with romantic tales and pins its faith on the cult of style, believing, as it does, that nothing great can be achieved in the ordinary way. Its prose is actuated by an outrageous tendency to reproduce the manner or mannerism of poetry, thereby becoming neither good prose nor good poetry; and in evolving its own sesquipedalian affectation, long-drawn-out brilliance and overwhelming profusion, it loses raciness, vigour and even sanity. Although there is great ingenuity, and even wealth of real wit, in the veritable battalion of puns, similes, hyperboles and antitheses, there is no sense of restraint and proportion; and as the narrative is reduced to a mere skeleton in favour of romanticised sentiment and an array of pompous phrases, there is hardly any room for real humour. It is doubtful whether Bāṇabhaṭṭa ever saw the comic aspect of putting the entire tale in the mouth of a parrot, or realised the ludicrous side of some of his enormous exaggerations and strange conceits; and it is no use upholding his picture of the Drāviḍa ascetic or his descriptoon of Skandagupta as having a nose as long as his sovereign's pedigree. The richness of verbal wit

of these old-time romancers may be admitted ; but when Subandhu, for instance, tells us that a lady is *yaktapāda* (red-footed) like a grammatical treatise, her feet being painted with red lac as sections of grammar with red lines, or that the rising sun is blood-coloured because the lion of dawn clawed the elephant of the night, he is blissfully unconscious that he is descending to the ridiculous from the sublime. Dandin's *Dasa-kumāra-carita*, however, is a delightful exception of a different type, which we shall consider in its proper place below.

One would expect that since the drama is, more or less, a transference of human action on the stage, there would be more exuberance of life and attention to the realities of human nature. But Sanskrit drama was considered, both in theory and practice, as a subdivision of Sanskrit poetry, and could not escape its traditional limitations. The earlier drama, however, affords one or two exceptions. The wit and humour of Śūdraka, for instance, who must have realised that he was not composing an elegant series of sentimental verses but was writing a real drama of artistic and social challenges, are indeed remarkably refreshing in their unique dramatic setting. A story of unconventional love of a high-souled and cultured Brahman for a witty and wise courtesan, the *Mṛcchakatika* is not shorn of real poetry and sentiment, but it unfolds an amusing world of rascals, schemers, idlers, gamblers, thieves, courtiers, constables and even hangmen,—riffraffs of society indeed, but all amiable gentlemen ! With great ingenuity the private affairs of the lovers are linked with a political intrigue which involves the city and the kingdom ; and into the cleverly conceived plot are thrown a comedy of errors which leads to disaster and an act of burglary which leads to happiness, a murder and a court-scene. In the diversity of individualised characters and dramatic situations from common, even low, life, Śūdraka's comic spirit, as one of his Western critics justly says, "runs the whole gamut from grim to farcical, from satirical to quaint", while his corresponding sense of pathos is equally real and impressive. An exception should also be made in favour of Viśākhadatta who, judged by modern standards, was also able to write a real drama. He had consummate skill in weaving an ingenious plot and creat-

ing amusing characters, but his *Mudra-rakṣasa*, as a drama of political intrigue, is of a some what prosaic cast, its action taking the form essentially of a game of skill, in which the interest is made to depend on the plots and counter-plots of two rival politicians. There is little room here for softer feelings or lightness of touch ; but it is an alert and really humorous imagination which can conceive and create the scene of feigned quarrel between Cāṇakya and Candragupta, carried on with effective gravity and dignity, but with the purpose really of a ruse to deceive Rākṣasa.

These are fine dramas indeed ; but the rather formless poetical plays of Bhavabhūti (8th century A.D.), the youngest of the earlier group of classical dramatists, are typical of Sanskrit dramatic composition in general. If the courtier and the man about town (*Nāgaraka*) stood at the centre of this literature, it gained in urbanity and elegance ; but we have seen that the atmosphere became too refined and artificial to convert the comedy of polite life into a real comedy of manners. Not the courtier, nor the *Nāgaraka*, but the *Sahṛdaya*, the expert aesthete, came to dominate the taste and inclination of later literature. The playwrights preferred to draw upon the epic and legendary cycles of stories with a more conscious leaning towards poetic extravagance and greater lack of dramatic power and originality. The taste for elegancies of language and sentiment increased with greater isolation of drama from life. The result was that what was produced was neither good drama nor good poetry. Even middle class life was presented by Bhavabhūti in an excessively poetic and sentimental atmosphere. The heroic and erotic drama alone survived, with the thinnest surplus of plays of other kind ; but the heroic degenerated into the pseudo-heroic and the erotic into the namby-pamby. Common life was left to inferior talents, and their productions were allowed, in course of time, to pass into neglect and oblivion.

It is natural, therefore, that expression of wit and humour, like angel's visit ; should become few and far between. Bhavabhūti, very wisely, drops the *Vidūṣaka*, and leaves the perilous side of humour alone. In his *Mālatī-mādhava*, however, he attempts some comic relief in the episode of the pretended marriage of Nandana to Makaranda disguised as Mālatī, while

Makaranda's impersonation involves Madayantikā's mistaking him for Mālatī and confessing unawares her own love for him. The device is well conceived<sup>1</sup> and has points in its favour, but Bhavabhūti is generally too earnest to be really humourous. And as a corollary, in the matter of pathos also, which is closely allied to humour, he has not the true delicacy which can distinguish the pathetic from the maudlin. The love-agony in his plays becomes too prolonged, unmanly and unconvincing. For instance, he makes his Mādhava faint too often and this happens even at a time when he should have rushed to save his friend's life in danger ! The interminable lamentations, tears and faintings of even his more mature and royal Rāma are certainly overdone to the verge of crudity.

What we find foreshadowed in Bhavabhūti becomes, in an exaggerated form, a definite posture with the decadent playwrights who succeed him. There is a vast amount of distress in what are meant to be pathetic scenes, but we read through them comfortably without tears or emotion unless the sham-tragic lingo becomes too much for our patience. The extreme rarity, and when they occur, the utter worthlessness, of comic or pseudo-comic scenes are on a par with the extravagance and tediousness of this diffused rhetorical pathos, as well as with the huffiness and exaggerated passion of impossible stage-heroes. The fact is that the lack of humour explains and is explained by the lack of pathos, and both spring from a lack of grasp on the essentials of human nature. These sentimentally idealised writings hardly show any sense of the stress and contradiction from which both tragedy and comedy arise. The

<sup>1</sup> Kājāśekhara copies this, with much less success, in his *Viddha-ādā-bhāṣjikā*, in arranging marriage of the king to the boy of unsuspected sex.—Stray instances of witty or humorous incidents are not wanting : such as, the comedy of costume in Harṣa's *Nāgārjana*, where the Viṭa mistakes the Viḍūṣaka, sleeping covered by a woman's mantle, to be his own *īnamorata*, embraces and fondles him ; or in the scene in Kṛṣṇamītra's allegorical play, the *Probodha-candrodaya*, between Egoism and his grandson Deceit who are good examples of hypocrisy, or where Peace searches in vain for her mother, Faith, in Jainism, Buddhism and Vedicism (Soma Cult), each of whom appears with a wife who claims to be Faith. But it cannot be said that they show a true appreciation of that fine form of humour which has at its root an abundance of amused sympathy with human frailty.

attitude is ethically clear and regular ; there is no situation of moral complexity, as well as no appreciation of the inherent inconsistencies of human character ; no shadow of tragic error qualifies heroic grandeur as no shade of good is allowed to redeem foulness. We have consequently neither really tragic heroes nor really lively rogues. As humour often degenerates into coarse and boisterous laughter, by tragedy is understood a mere misfortune, a simple decline from good to evil hap, the nodus of which can be dissolved in sentiment or cut away by the force of merciful circumstances. The theory insists on a happy ending even of an intrinsically tragic theme. Very often the hero undergoes real and grievous affliction, but all pangs and perils give way before him, and the poignancy of tragedy is warded off. The calamity never comes home, but becomes the means of sentimental effusion ; and the hero is seldom brought to the point where he can utter the agonised cry of Oedipus or Lear in their last straits. The comedy, in the same way, is confined chiefly to insignificant characters and to equally insignificant incidents. There is no breadth of sympathy for the follies and oddities of human nature, no amused allowance for its ugliness and rascality, no inclination to look at life more widely and wisely, and no sense of tear in laughter, which consequently descends to puerile and tasteless vulgarity. There is hardly any passage where the reader laughs but lays down the book to think. Sanskrit literature has enough of wit, and it is often unquestionable and strikingly effective ; but it rarely achieves tragedy in its deeper sense or comedy in its higher forms.

The failure, with rare exceptions, to achieve real comedy even in satiric or farcical sketches is best illustrated by a class of small *eroticocomic* compositions, namely, the *Monologue-play* or *Bhāṇa* and the professed *Farce* or *Prahasana*, both of which, closely allied in certain characteristics, represent direct attempts at raising laughter. But these types of dramatic entertainment contain popular traits in their theme and rough gaiety, and must have, in a limited sense, been popular in appeal ; but they belong, not to the popular theatre, but to the literary drama. They are definitely literary productions of the elegant and mannered kind and, therefore, exhibit their normal stylistic merits and defects. Both have for their theme

the coarse and shady acts of debauchees, rogues and vagrants; but in effect they develop the character of the old Viṭa<sup>1</sup> and Vidūṣaka of the regular drama, who become principal and not merely incidental. The exaggeration of oddity and vice found in these two types of plays, therefore, is no more nor less removed from real life than the picture of ideal virtue in the serious drama.

The Bhāṇa is a peculiar one-act and one-character play in which the Viṭa, neglected as a character in the serious drama, figures alone as the 'hero' in all his glory. Most of the existing specimens (about a dozen so far published) are comparatively modern and belong mostly to the South. They lack variety and are of the same pattern; and whatever comic or satiric touch they contain, it is almost lost in their excessive eroticism and their failure to achieve more than conventional quality. The theme may be described as the record of the Rake's Progress. There is no action, but only a prolonged monologue, carried on by supposititious dialogues between the Viṭa and his unseen friends, and involving a perfect day of adventure in his imaginary promenade through the city. In this way he describes the shady lives and amorous adventures of a large number of his acquaintances, mostly rogues, hypocrites, bawds and harlots. Satire is slight and only incidentally introduced in some Bhāṇas, ridiculing, for instance, lewd Paurāṇikas, old Śrotriyas and fraudulent astrologers, or particular sects like Jaigamas, Saivas and Vaiṣṇavas; but the language and imagery throughout are, as we have said, hopelessly erotic and sentimental.

But there are four Bhāṇas which definitely belong to an earlier age and show greater variety and liveliness, as well as

<sup>1</sup> Sanskrit Dramaturgy takes the Viṭa as an assistant in the love-affairs of the hero, although the *Mṛcchakaṭīka* and *Cārudatta*, where he chiefly occurs, represents him differently. Originally he was perhaps a witty and accomplished companion of a prince or of a Nāgaraka or of a courtesan (cf. Vātsyāyana i.4.45). He resembles distantly the Parasite of the Greek Drama, but he is not a despicable character. He figures as a man of wit, polish and culture, a frequenter of the gay society, a poet skilled in the arts, especially in music and erotica; and even if he is a voluptuary, he does not lack taste and breeding. In the later Bhāṇas, he retains the echo of his old polish but becomes degraded as a worthless professional amorist, widely acquainted with the ways of the demi-monde.

a larger zest for social satire and comic relief. In one of these, the witty and accomplished Viṭa finding the rainy reason too depressing comes out to spend the day in some form of amusement. He cannot afford dice and drink—even his clothes are reduced to one garment; so he wends his way towards the colony of harlots, meeting and jesting with various kinds of people, and ultimately reaching the house of the roguish couple, namely, a decrepit Nagna-śramaṇaka Viśvālaka and his dried-up mistress Sunandā, where he passes the day discussing with considerable wit and pose of authority certain knotty problems of love put to him by his friends. The title of the work, ascribed to Iśvaradatta, namely, *Dhūrīa-viṭa-satīvāda* or 'Dialogue of a Rogue and a Rake', is amply justified by its content which gives, among other things, an amusing epitome of the aesthetic and erotic laws governing the life of a rake. In the *Pāda-tāḍitaka* or 'Kick of the Foot' of Śyāmilaka, the theme is more interesting and treatment more amusing. The Viṭa sets out to attend an assembly of rogues and rakes who meet to consider the question of expiation referred to them (for the learned Brahmins could not find any prescribed mode in the orthodox codes of Manu and other authorities) by Taṇḍikoki Viṣṇunāga, the son of a Mahāmātra and himself a high official, for the indignity he has suffered by playfully allowing an intoxicated courtesan, a Saurāṣṭra girl, named Madanasenikā, to kick him on such a sacred spot of his body as his head. Various amusing modes of expiation are suggested; but in the end it is agreed, on the proposal of the presiding rake, that Madanasenikā should put more sense into her lover by setting her foot on the president's own head in the sight of Viṣṇunāga !

It is true that the prevailing erotic atmosphere even of these earlier Bhāṇas spoils much of their decided leaning towards satiric and comic portraiture, but one scarcely finds elsewhere their greater freedom of natural humour and polite irony, their power of shrewd observation and presentation of a motley group of amusing characters, not elaborately painted but suggested with a few lively touches. Characters like Dattakalaśa, the pedantic Pāṇinian with his sesquipedalian affectation and war on the Kātantrikas; Sārasvata-bhadra, the sky-gazing poet with a verse written on the wall; Sañdhilaka, the Sāky-

bhikṣu who consoles the hatera Saṅghadāsikī with words of the Buddha; the prudish and hypocritical Pavitraka, shrinking from the defiling touch of other people in the street, but secretly visiting houses of ill-fame; the Śreṣṭhiputra Kṛṣṇalaka, a young blood averse to marriage, who thinks his 'misbegotten' father to be an obstacle to his enjoyment of wine, woman and gambling; the sanctimonious Buddhist nun, Vilāsa-kaundinī, of easy virtue, who always quotes the scriptures; the decrepit actor Mṛdarigavāsulaka, who apes youth; the Pustakavācaka Upagupta, a sort of Falstaff, at war with his mother-in-law,—to quote at random only a few—are specimens which are as ridiculous as they are rare in later literature. F. W. Thomas is undoubtedly just in his remark that the natural humour of these four Bhāṇas "need not fear comparison with that of a Ben Jonson or a Molière".

Although there is greater opportunity of direct comedy and satire, the Prahasana or Farce which, like the Bhāṇa, consists of one but sometimes two Acts, does not deserve much praise. The earliest farcical sketch in one Act, the *Malta-vilāsa* or 'Diversion of the Drunk', of king Mahendravikrama of Kāñcī (about 620 A.D.), depicts the drunken revelry of a Śaiva mendicant, bearing a human skull in lieu of an almsbowl and accordingly calling himself a Kapālin, his wandering with his wench through the purlieus of Kāñcī on his way to a tavern, his scuffle with a hypocritical Buddhist monk whom he accuses of the theft of the precious bowl, his appeal to a degenerate Pāśupata to settle the dispute, and the final recovery of the bowl from a lunatic who had retrieved it from a stray dog. The work does not evince much distinctive literary merit; the incident is amusing but slight, the satire caustic but broad. Within its limitations, however, it shows power of vivid portraiture in a simple and elegant style, and certainly deserves an indulgent verdict as the earliest known specimen of Sanskrit Farce. The next work, undoubtedly old but of uncertain authorship, is the *Bhagavat-ajjukīya* or 'Farce of the Saint and the Courtesan'. It can be distinguished from all other Sanskrit farces in that the comic element is found not in the oddities of character but in the ludicrousness of the plot. The saint is here a true ascetic and learned teacher, well versed in Yoga, even if his pupil Śāṇḍilya, sceptical of Yoga, is the typi-

cal *Vidūṣaka* of the serious drama. The courtesan, who enters the neighbouring garden and awaits her lover, does not show the vulgar traits of the common harlot, ridiculed in the normal *Prahasana*. The funny situation arises when the girl falls dead bitten by a serpent, and the saint, finding an opportunity of impressing his scoffing pupil by an actual display of Yogic powers, enters the dead body of the courtesan. The messenger of Death (Yama), coming to fetch the departed soul and finding that a mistake has been committed, allows the soul of the courtesan to enter the lifeless body of the saint. The curious exchange of souls makes the saint speak and act like the courtesan, while the courtesan adopts the language and conduct of the saint, until the messenger of Yama restores the equilibrium and returns the souls to their respective bodies. Although a small piece, the play attains real comedy, not by cheap witticisms and antics, but by a genuinely amusing plot and commendable characterisation; it is easily the best of the Sanskrit farces.

For, the later farces are crotico-comic productions of an unredeemingly coarser type, and have little to recommend them. The earliest of the group, the *Laṭaka-melaka* or 'Conference of Rogues' by Kavirāja Śaṅkhadhara (12th century) is typical of the rest. It describes in two Acts the assembly of all kinds of knaves, in the house of the bawd Danturā for winning the favour of her daughter Madanamañjarī. They represent a number of types, each labelled with a particular foible, indicated by their very names. First comes, with his parasite Kula-vyādhi, the profligate professor Sabhāsali who, having a ferociously quarrelsome wife Kalahapriyā, seeks diversion in the company of harlots. As Madanamañjarī has accidentally swallowed a fish bone, the quack doctor Jantuketu is called in; his methods are absurd, but his words and acts make the girl laugh, with the happy result of dislodging the bone. Then appear the Digambara Jatāsura and the Kāpālika Ajñānaśrī quarrelling; the cowardly village headman Saṅgramavisara, accompanied by his sycophant Viśvāsaghātaka; the hypocritical Brahman Mithyāśukla; the fraudulent preceptor Phuṅkāṭamīśra; the depraved Buddhist monk Vyasanākara, interested in a washerwoman, and other similar characters. There is a bargaining of the lovers, and in the end a marriage is satisfactorily

settled between the old bawd Danturā and the Digambara Jaṭṭasura.

The other extant farces, belonging to a much later time, are even less attractive. There is some wit, as well as broad satire, but they are often defaced by open vulgarity and immoderate eroticism. The method of presenting a single trait, instead of the whole man, in an exaggerated form, and of attaching a descriptive name to it, can hardly be expected to produce life-like results. But the device becomes an almost established convention in a sense much more stereotyped than that of Ben Jonson's "humour". We have, for instance, curious names like Anaya-sindhu, Kali-vatsala or Duritārṇava, of kings; Viśvabhaṇḍa, Dharmānala or Anṛta-sarvasva, of court chaplains; Abhavya-śekhara, Kukarma-pañcānana or Kumati-puñja, of courtiers; Vyādhi-sindhu or Āturāntaka, of physicians; Samarakātara or Rapa-jambūka, of generals; Śiṣṭāntaka or Sādhu-himsaka, of police chiefs; and even obscenely repulsive Pracanḍa-śepha, of the overseer of the royal harem! It is the letter, and not the spirit, of comedy to fasten such professional badges and define characters by cut-and-dried peculiarities.

The Sanskrit farce, as a whole, suffers from poverty of invention and lack of taste. It has all the point that is in ribaldry and all the humour that is in extravagance. The interest seldom centres in the cleverness of the plot or in well developed intrigue, but in the absurdities of character which are often of a broad and obvious type. We have neither thoroughly alive rascals nor charmingly entertaining fools, for they are all thrown into fixed moulds without much regard for proportion or reality. Apart from the inevitable eroticism which, however, is open and not insinuating like that of Wycherley or Congreve, the whole atmosphere is low and depressing. No doubt, the theme of tricks and quarrels of low characters is allowed by Sanskrit theory, but the prescription is taken too literally. The characters in the Prahasana are low, not in social position, but as unredeemingly base and carnal; and there being credit for no other quality, they are hardly human. The procession of unmitigated rogues and their rougher pastimes need not be without interest; but there is no merit in attempting to raise laughter by deliberately vulgar exhibitions and expressions, which mar the effect of the plays even as burlesques or cari-

catures. The parody of high-placed people loses its point, not only from tasteless exaggeration, but also from its extremely sordid and prosaic treatment. Even if refinement is out of place in the farce, the detailed and puerile coarseness of what Hazlitt calls 'handicraft wit' is redundant and ineffective.

There is, however, a small body of distinctly humorous writings which, composed in the literary mode and style, do not profess to be regular comedy or satire, but which, under a thin narrative or didactic veil, show clearly comic or satiric tendency. The most remarkable of these works is Dāṇḍin's *Daśa-kumāra-carita* or 'Adventures of Ten Princes'. Though ostensibly a prose Kāvya, it differs in matter, form and spirit from the normal specimens of Bāṇa and Subandhu, and it is rightly described as a romance of roguery. Although it never abandons the romantic interest and finds a place for marvel and magic and winning of maidens, it is yet primarily concerned with the adventures of wicked tricksters, who are yet loveable rascals. Dāṇḍin deliberately violates the prescription that the Prose Kāvya, being allied to the Metrical Kāvya, should have a good subject (*sad-āśraya*) and that the hero should be noble and elevated. Gambling, burglary, cunning, fraud, violence, murder, impersonation, abduction and illicit love constitute, jointly or severally, the dominating incidents in every story. The princes are all accomplished gentlemen, but the two chief motives, which actuate their wild deeds, are the desire for delights of love and possession of a realm; for which ends they are not at all fastidious about the means. Take, for instance, the story of Upahāravarman, which is one of the longest and best, being rich in varied incidents and interesting characters. The seduction practised on the ascetic Marici by the accomplished but heartless courtesan, Kāma-mañjarī, who also robs and deceives the merchant Vastupāla and turns him into a destitute Jaina monk, but who in her turn is deceived, robbed and punished by the equally unscrupulous but large-hearted hero of the story; the adventure in the gambling house; the ancient art of thieving in which the hero is proficient; the punishing of the old misers of Campā who are taught that the goods of the world are perishable; the motif of the inexhaustible purse and subterranean passage borrowed from folk-tale; all these, described with considerable humour and vividness, are woven into the story of

the Indian Robin Hood, who plunders the rich to pay the poor, unites lovers, reinstates unfortunate victims of meanness and treachery, and passes with ease from the prison to the royal harem.

The work of Dandin is, no doubt, imaginative fiction and absorbs much from the folk-tale, but in its lively series of pictures of the rakes and ruffians of great cities, it somewhat approaches the spirit of the picaresque romance of Europe. Even if it is not open satire, the treat is politely satirical in utilising, with no small power of wit and observation, the amusing possibilities of incorrigible knaves, hypocritical ascetics, heartless harlots, cunning bawds, unfaithful wives, fervent lovers and light-hearted idlers, who jostle along in the small compass of its swift and racy narratives. The pictures are, no doubt, heightened, but in all essentials they are true; not wholly agreeable, but free alike from affectation and repulsiveness; not truly moral, but bordering upon fundamental non-morality. Even the higher world of gods, Brahmins and princes is regarded with little respect. The gods are brought in to justify the unscrupulous deeds of the princes themselves; the Buddhist nuns act as procurresses; the teaching of the Jina is declared by a Jaina monk to be nothing more than a swindle; and the Brahman's greed of gold and love of cock-fights are held up to ridicule. The style and diction of the work is comparatively free from the extended scale and ponderous stateliness of the normal Prose Kavya; it is elegant, vigorous and effective enough for the graphic dressing up of a cheat, a hypocrite, an amorist or a braggart. These qualities, rare indeed in Sanskrit literature, make Dandin's delightfully unethical romancero picaresco a unique literary masterpiece, almost creating a new genre.

Unfortunately, the difficult type inaugurated by Dandin's unconventional romance never found favour with the theorists; and there was no gifted follower who could develop its many possibilities. An extremely limited number of satirically inclined works, however, came into existence after Dandin; but they are all written in verse and are entirely different in style and spirit. The earliest and most noteworthy of these is the erotic-satiric *Kuttani-mata* or 'Advice of a Procuress' which, in spite of its ugly title and unsavoury content, was written by a highly respectable person, named Dāmodaragupta,

who was a poet and minister of Jayapida of Kashmir (779-813 A.D.). The theme is slight but the treatment is the poet's own. A courtesan of Benares, named Mālatī, unable to attract lovers, seeks the advice of an old and experienced bawd, Vikarālā, who instructs her to ensnare Chintāmani, son of a high official, and describes in detail the art of winning love and lucre. The discourse is strengthened by stories of some courtesans and their lovers in which, however, the comic is intermingled with the erotic and pathetic sentiments. The stories, though well told, are without distinction, and cannot be compared to those of Daṇḍin; while the more squalid subject-matter, though delicately handled, is not above reproach. But it would be unjust to reject the work merely for its content. It is a distinctly artistic production, the merit of which lies in the elegantly polished and facetious style with which the droll life, possibly of contemporary society, is painted with considerable power of polite banter and gentle ridicule. The erotic tendency, no doubt, prevails, but there is no didactic moralising, nor any squeamish language in describing women and their ways. Dāmodaragupta is a humorist rather than a satirist, an artist in words and a poet; he neither hates the knaves nor despises the fools into which he finds his society divided. But if his good-natured railery is not biting, it is not entirely toothless.

Kṣemendra, also a Kashmirian of the second half of the 11th century, takes Dāmodaragupta as his model; but he is not a poet and humorist, but an industrious polymath, a devotee of what may be called miscellaneous literature and, when he chooses, a foul-mouthed lampooner of contemporary society. In his *Samaya-māṭyākā* or 'Source-book of Convention' for the courtesan, he is, no doubt, inspired by Dāmodaragupta, and selects a similar theme of the tricks and snares of the harlot. A small tract of eight chapters, written mostly in the fluent *Slōka* and not in the slow-moving *Āryā* metre of its prototype, it gives the slight story of a young harlot, named Kalāvatī, who is introduced by a roguish barber to an 'owl-faced, crow-necked and cat-eyed' old bawd, called Kāṅkālī, for detailed but witty instruction in her difficult profession, and who succeeds with the advice and assistance to ensnare a prococious stripling and rob his rich and foolish parents. The most curious part of the work is the amusing account, given with touches of local colour,

of Kaṅkāli's own adventures, her wanderings in younger days through the length and breadth of Kashmir as a whore, pretended wife and widow to many men, nun, procurer, thief, shop-girl, seller of cakes, barmaid, beggar-woman, flower-girl, woman-magician and holy saint ; while her spicy anecdotes from a vast store of experience, her classification of different types of men after different birds and beasts, and her shady but ingenious ways of cheating fools and knaves are not without interest. The merit of the work as a whole lies, not indeed in its indecorous subject, but in its heightened yet graphic picture of certain types of men and scenes, painted with considerable sharpness of phrasing and characterisation, and with an undertone of mocking satire against many forms of prevalent depravity. Like Dāmodaragupta, Kṣemendra never shows any squeamishness regarding delicate, questionable and even repulsive topics, nor any tendency to romanticise them. He is an equal expert in erotics and shrewd observer of life, but he lacks Dāmodaragupta's lightness of touch and polite wit, and often lapses into coarse realism or bitter sarcasm. It is true that he is more a satirist than a humorist, and is in a sense privileged to present things in a repulsively naked form, which his subject demands and is often unable to avoid ; but it cannot be said that his outspoken frankness does not often slip into deliberate gloating over bald and unnecessary vulgarity. Nevertheless, the *Samaya-māṭṛkā* as *chronique scandaleuse* is not mere pornography, nor an immoral work with a moral tag, any more than the *Kuṭṭāṇī-mata* is ; it is, in spite of its obvious grossness, an interesting specimen, of an approach to realistic satirical writing which is so rarely cultivated in Sanskrit.

It is not necessary to consider in this connexion some smaller works of Kṣemendra, such as the *Sevya-sevakopadeśa* (sixty verses on the relation of master and servant), *Cāru-caryā* (a century of moral aphorisms on virtuous conduct illustrated by miscellaneous myths and legends), *Caturvarga-saṅgraha* (on the four general objects of human activity, namely, virtue; wealth, love and salvation). They are not as richly descriptive or narrative as astutely homiletic, although there are occasional flashes of trenchant wit or the flavour of amusing word-pictures and anecdotes. Of the same type but a much better and larger work, is his *Darpa-dalana*. It is a diatribe against human

pride, which is described as springing from seven principal causes, namely, birth, wealth, learning, beauty, valour, charity and asceticism ; they are treated separately in as many chapters, with illustration of each type of bragging by an invented tale. Here the moralist is dominant, but the satirist is irrepressible and peeps out very often, as for instance, in the description of pretenders to learning and to sanctity.

In his *Kalā-vilāsa*, however, Kṣemendra reverts more distinctly to satirical sketching of various forms of human frailty, with less coarseness and greater sense of comedy, and adopts the moric Āryā metre of Dāmodaragupta's work. It is a poem in ten cantos, in which Mūladeva, the master of trickery, famed in Indian legend, instructs his young disciple Chandragupta, son of a merchant, in the art of knavery and illustrates his exposition by amusing tales. The first canto gives a general account of the various forms of cheating ; the second describes greed ; the third discusses the erotic impulse and wiles of woman ; the fourth is devoted entirely to the harlot ; the fifth depicts the wicked Kāyasthas, skilled in crooked writing, who as high-placed executive officers, possessing little conscience but great power of mischief, form the target of Kṣemendra's special invective ; the sixth dilates upon the follies of pride ; the seventh describes with much wit the wandering singer, bard, dancer and actor, who steal people's money by their device of making harmonious noise and meaningless antics ; the eighth deals with the tricks of the goldsmith who steals your gold before your eyes ; the ninth is concerned with various forms of swindle practised by the astrologer, quack doctor, seller of patent medicine, trader, vagrant, ascetic and *chevalier d'industrie* of the same feather ; while the tenth and last canto winds up with a constructive lecture on what the arts should be. The work is thus a fairly comprehensive discourse on the activities of notorious tricksters known to Kṣemendra ; and his easy and elegant style makes the pictures amusing and the satire effective.

The two works, *Deśopadeśa* and *Narma-mālā* of Kṣemendra, the one in the form of ironical advice and the other in that of jesting pleasantry, are in some respects complementary to each other and conceived in the same spirit and style ; but they are directed, more narrowly but with greater concentration, against the hypocrisy, corruption and oppression which prevailed in

Kashmir in Kṣemendra's days. The *Desopadeśa* deals, in eight sections, with the Cheat, who builds castles in the air to delude other people; the avaricious Miser, miserable, dirty and desolate, who never enjoys what he hoards; the Prostitute, described as a mechanical wooden puppet, with her cheap tricks and one hundred and one amulets worn on her body for luck; the snake-like old Bawd, who can make the possible impossible and *vice versa*, but who cannot help getting bruised in constant brawls; the ostentatious Voluptuary, monkey-like with his foppish dress, curly hair, dental speech and love for loose women; the students from foreign lands, especially from Gauḍa, who sanctimoniously avoid touch of other people lest their fragile body should break, but who, under the bracing climate of Kashmir, acquire overbearing manner, refuse to pay shopkeepers, and are ready to draw the knife on the slightest provocation; the old man, marrying a young wife to the amusement and joy of other people, and begetting a child, like a withered tree bearing unexpected fruit; the degraded Śaiva teacher, ignorant and lecherous, and the people who come to him, namely, the inevitable Kāyastha and his fickle wife favoured by the Guru, the poetaster struggling with his shabby verses, the crafty merchant, the bragging alchemist, the false ascetic, the boastful grammarian, the stupid, ink-besmeared scribe. In the *Narma-mālā* we have a similar series of pen-pictures, but its three chapters are specially meant to be a sharp satire on the misrule and oppression of the Kāyastha administration before the time of king Ananta of Kashmir. The Kāyastha, whose pen was his sword, monopolised all key-positions in the state, as the Gṛhakṛtyādhipati (or chief executive officer of internal administration), the Paripālaka (or provincial governor), the Lekhopādhyāya (or clerk-in-chief), the Gañja-divira (or chief accountant) and the Niyogin (or village executive officer). In the first chapter are described the public activities of these and other officers, their parasites and myrmidons, their corrupt and atrocious misdeeds; the rest of the work outlines, with great skill, the degraded private life of the typical Kāyastha and his frivolous wife, in the course of which we have again a quack doctor, a foolish astrologer, a Buddhist nun acting as the traditional go-between, a surgeon-barber; and the Śaiva Guru who institutes a religious sacrifice.

to restore the mysteriously failing health of the Kāyastha's wife. Much of the satire in these two works has its specific direction, local and temporal; but a very large proportion, substantially faithful even if squalidly exaggerated *cum grano salis*, will always be applicable so long as there exist in the world sharpers, boasters, liars, hypocrites and pettifoggers. The manners may be obsolete and the topical details superfluous, but the pictures, painted with the unerring insight of a shrewd observer, will never be out of date. The value of Kṣemendra's satirical sketches will be clear when one considers them in the light of the vein of originality which practically failed and ceased after him. We have some feeble attempts, but, these later moralising authors, anxious to maintain respectability, are afraid of descending to repellent reality, and only touch the fringe of it, from a safe distance, with the long end of the stick of romantic verse.

A much more pleasing and abundant expression of delicate wit and humour will be found scattered in the hundreds of miniature love-stanzas than what one finds so scantily in the limited number of long-drawn poems of serious literature. These little stanzas occur throughout in the erotic Sātakas, in the Anthologies, as well as in the gallant toying and trifling of the light-hearted love-dramas. Love is depicted here, not in its infinite depth and poignancy, nor in its ideal beauty, but in its playful moods of vivid enjoyment breaking forth into delicate blossoms of fancy. If Sanskrit poetic theory insists upon impersonalised enjoyment of personal emotion, this cultured attitude of artistic aloofness is shown by the way in which the poet lifts his tyrannical passion into a placid mood of delectation, whereby even the darkening sorrows of love dissolve into sparkling tints of laughter. The artistic mood thus becomes akin to the humorous.

The earlier centuries of stanzas, ascribed to Hāla, Amaru and Bhārtṛhari, as well as later collections, abound in fine verses which make light of the serious passion with their subtle wit and gentle humour. An early example of pure wit, in which a quotation or hackneyed idea is dexterously turned to another strange purpose is found in the clever, if somewhat gross, application of two lines of Aśvaghoṣa by Bhārtṛhari in his own two lines. Aśvaghoṣa in his *Saundarananda* echoes the age-old

denunciation of woman as the source of all evil :

In the words of women there is honey,

In their hearts there is deadly poison.

Repeating this half-verse in his *Śṛṅgāra-śataka*, Bhartṛhari twists the idea into a flippant effect, at which the austere Aśvaghoṣa would perhaps have frowned with distaste :

Hence doth one drink from those lips,

And strike at the heart with the fist !

But instances of wit or witticism, which relax the tension of high-strung sentiment or playfully make fun of the amorous condition, are much finer than this. They are, however, so plentiful and diversified that we can, for illustration, refer only to a very few. The wife is offended and angry, the husband falls at her feet in penitence ; their little boy spoils the pathetic effect by seizing the opportunity of riding on papa's back, so that the incensed mother could hardly repress her laugh. The lover's heart is filled by thousands of women, the poor girl is unable to find 'a place in it ; hence she is making her already thin body thinner and thinner. On hearing Yaśodā say that Kṛṣṇa is but an infant, the maidens of the village smile knowingly at the so-called infant. As the fair maiden pours out water for the thirsty traveller, he feasts his eyes on her and lets the water escape through his fingers, while she with equal zest lessens the stream of water. The young couple quarrel and pretend to sleep with breathless silence ; it remains to be seen which of them will stick to the last ! The maiden who guards the field has no rest, wayfarers who insist on asking their way, however much they know it. Once bitten twice shy ; the monkey which mistook a bee for a black plum will pause before it ventures again. To the question why the bust of a woman never remains firm, it is wittily replied that nothing stays firmly on a woman's heart. A young lady wonders why all gossip centres on *her* lover alone ; is there only one young man in the village ? The futility of her anger in the presence of her beloved is thus confided by a young girl to her companions : "I turned my face down from the direction of his face and fixed my looks on my feet ; I stopped my eager ears from listening to his words ; I concealed with my hands the thrill on my sweating cheeks ; but, O friends, what could I do to prevent the knots on my bodice from bursting asunder ?"

'The house-parrot, overhearing in the night the words murmured in confidence by the young couple, began to repeat them loudly in the morning before their elders; embarrassed but quick-witted, the young wife stays his impudence by placing before his beak a piece of ruby from her earrings on the pretext of giving him the seed of a pomegranate.'

The same light of jewelled and facetious fancy plays on the surface of many a gnomic or reflective stanza, which gives us droll bits of homely wisdom, often cleverly polarised into antithesis or crystallised into epigram. It is difficult to convey the terseness of metaphorical or paronomastic wit, on which much of the raciness depends, for the expression is often characteristically Indian; but we risk here just a few examples, for want of more space to illustrate their witty sententious style. Where could the stag-like solecism flee pursued by the lion-like grammar, were there not cavern-like mouths of teachers, actors, astrologers, doctors and priests? Better death than feeding an uninvited guest who calmly sits down, though you glare angrily at him. For a man to serve a king is as wise as to lick the edge of a sword, embrace a lion or kiss the mouth of a serpent. Be not too upright; go to the wood and see,—the erect trees are those that are felled, the crooked are left standing. When the West unites with the Sun, her face glows, the face of the East is dark; there is no woman who is not jealous. Even if a serpent has no poison, he should swell out his hood; poison or no poison, the expansion of the hood itself is enough. The light and insignificant dust, daily trampled by the feet, is tossed high by the fickle wind, and it sits on the top of lofty mountains. The capable one, becoming a victim of his qualities, bears the burden of work on his shoulder; but the wicked bull, whose shoulder is not hardened by work, sleeps comfortably.

It is difficult to characterise the versatile and multiform wit scintillating in such breezy little sanzas, or to say in what sense or how far the wit is specifically Indian. But Sanskrit literature will furnish abundant illustration of the various forms of wit enumerated in Isaac Barrow's well-known description (*Works*, Ser. 14):

"Sometimes it lieth in a pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in the forging

of an apposite tale ; sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound ; sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of luminous expression ; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude. Sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly restoring an objection ; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense ; sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it ; sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being ; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange ; sometimes from a crafty wresting of obvious matter to the purpose ; often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how ! ”

A much more sustained vein of quiet, but incisive humour, resting not so much on sparkling sayings as on the rich setting of human nature, runs through and enlivens the fable and the popular tale which, made out of traditional material but reduced to a literary form in the *Pañca-tantra* and the *Byhat-kathā* respectively, had perhaps a direct popular appeal. They are interesting not only because of their lively narrative but also because they show a sense of the value of simple and direct style ; and the large number of recensions of these and other later story-books bears witness to their wide currency. The *Pañca-tantra* is not only one of the greatest books which have an interesting history in world-literature, but it is also the solitary surviving example in Sanskrit of a masterpiece of its own kind, the unique work of a great but quiet humorist. The author, whoever he is, is a wise and amusing moralist who, under a transparent veil of pedagogic seriousness, can clothe his abstractions with wings, or a beak, or a tail, or claws, or long ears, and can make them talk and act with greater sense and shrewdness, or with greater stupidity and drollery, than the presumptively superior human beings. The work is a fantastic travesty of natural history in the service of moral philosophy. Even if it inculcates expediency in the practical affairs of life rather than a strict code of uprightness, there is

much sound sense, which usually means sound morality. Its appeal stands by itself; it does not depend on subtlety of verbal wit, and has nothing to do with the mawkishness or eroticism with which humour is almost universally associated in Sanskrit literature. The frankly fictitious disguise presents eternal truths of human nature in a deliciously distorted but impressively instructive form, which is delightful alike to children and grown persons, to all ages and all lands.

The interest of the *Byhat-kathā* or "Great Tale" is different. The work is polymorphous like the *Pañca-tantra*, but it is neither a well knit nor a well proportioned book of practical wisdom; its extent is vast, content miscellaneous, and form chaotic; and its countless number of emboxed tales, legends and witty stories of human adventure would, in their rich and overwhelming mass, justify the quaint, but appropriate, title of Somadeva's largest version (of more than 21,000 verses!) as 'the Ocean of Streams of Stories' (*Kathā-sarit-sāgara*). Although the hero Naravāhanadatta is a much married prince, his chief and best love Madanamañjukā is the daughter of a courtesan; and the story is not of court-life or courtly adventure, nor even of heroic ideals. The work presents a kaleidoscopic picture of men and things, which is consonant with middle-class view of life, but which is sublimated with marvels of myth, magic and folk-tale, with the romance of strange adventure in fairy lands of fancy. It is, therefore, a book of larger and more varied appeal, containing, as it does, a gallery of sketches, both romantic and real; and Keith is perhaps just in characterising it as a kind of bourgeois epic. From our point of view it is an unparalleled store-house of spicy stories concerning the eternally interesting fools, knaves and naughty women—a veritable mine of comic invention—which evinces a wide, intimate and amused experience of human life, quite in keeping with the good-natured wit and humour of the ordinary man.

The later story-books are neither so vast nor varied in content. But the enigmatic 'Twenty-five Tales of the *Vetāla*' (*Vetāla-pañcavimśati*) is deservedly popular for its ingenious and witty narratives, while the 'Seventy Tales of a Parrot' (*Suka-saptati*) would repay reading, if one's taste inclines to wards frivolous but perennially entertaining anecdotes of

cunning women, who get out of embarrassing scrapes, deceive their foolish husbands, and even exact apologies from them for their very suspicion. But not so attractive is the *Bharaṭahādvātrīmśikā* or 'Thirty-two Tales of Śaiva Mendicants', of equally unknown date and authorship, in which are ridiculed the Śaiva Mendicants, who are made to quote the parallels of gods and saints to justify their own dubious conduct. Much better told are the 'Tales of Rogues' (*Dhūrtākhyāna*) of the Śevatāmbara Haribhadra Sūri (middle of the 8th century) which, with a Decamerone-like frame-work, satirises the incredibility of absurd Epic and Purāṇic tales by means of equally fantastic tales narrated by the assembled rogues. The Jaina authors are fond of stories, and have produced them in amazing profusion; some of the collections contain really amusing examples, and one need not speak disparagingly of Jaina achievement in narrative literature; but in whatever form they are presented, the stories are often inspired by religious propaganda, or have a moral implied or attached to them; they are seldom intended for mere entertainment.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is no study of the subject as a whole; but the erotico-satiric writings of Dāmodaragupta, Kṣemendra and others, the erotico-comic Bhāṇas and Prahasanas and Daṇḍin's romance in their humorous aspect, have been dealt with in some detail by the present writer in his *History of Sanskrit Literature*, University of Calcutta, 1947. This work may also be consulted generally for other classical works and authors referred to in this article; for which one may also refer to A. B. Keith, *Sanskrit Drama* (Oxford 1924) and *History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford 1928), as well as M. Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur* in three volumes (Leipzig 1909, 1920 and 1922). All these works furnish full bibliography of editions, translations and relevant studies. For the Bhāṇa and the Prahasana especially, see F. W. Thomas in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1924, p. 262f and Centenary Supplement to the same, 1924, pp. 129-36; S. K. De in the same *Journal*, 1926, pp. 63-90; and *Poona Orientalist*, vii, pp. 149-56. For witty erotic verses, see S. K. De, *Treatment of Love in Sanskrit Literature*, Calcutta,

1929. For Dhūrtākhyāna see edition of the work by A. N. Upadhye, Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, Bombay 1944. As some of the matter in this article is traversed by the present writer's other works, some repetition, but in a different bearing and perspective, has been unavoidable.

*Our Heritage*, 1955.

## ON KUNDAMĀLĀ

In his very interesting paper on the date of the *Kundamālā* (*ABORI*, vol. xv, pp. 236-239), W. C. Woolner has referred to the question of the authorship of this work. I may in this connection refer to a short note on the *Kundamālā* which I contributed to *JRAS*, 1924, pp. 663-64. It was F. W. Thomas who first threw doubt on the genuineness of the attribution of this work to Dīnīṅga in *JRAS*, 1924, p. 261. I drew attention to Sylvain Lévi's account of the *Nātya-darpana* in *JA*, cciiii, Octobre-Décembre, 1932, at p. 195, where the authors of the *Nātya-darpana* (second half of the 12th century) cite a *Kundamālā Vīranāga-nibaddha*. Now that the *Nātya-darpana*, edited from another Jaina MS, has been published in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series (No. xlvii, 1929), the citation will be found at p. 48 of the printed text. This *Vīranāga* may not unlikely be the Dhīranāga of the Tanjore MSS. The *bhadraṇa* Dhīranāga of the *Subhāśitāvalī* may or may not be the same person. Professor Lévi's conjecture that the *Kundamālā*, referred to in the *Nātya-darpana*, is the same as the *Kundamālā nāṭaka* by Nāgayya mentioned by Burnell 168a (Cf. Aufrecht, under Nāgayya) lacks corroboration : for Nāgayya's work appears to consist of five acts only.

It seems likely therefore that the name of the author of the *Kundamālā* was either Dhīranāga or *Vīranāga*, and not Dīnīṅga as given by the Mysore MS only. If this is so, then one would have no difficulty in subscribing to Woolner's statement that "if the author's name should turn out to be Dhīranāga all these arguments for putting the *Kundamālā* in the fifth century would disappear."

## ON THE WORD GADDARIKĀ

The word *gaddarikā* (also occurring in the variant forms of *gaddārikā*, *gaddalikā*, *gaddālikā*, *gađurikā* and *gađulikā*) is not noticed by Sanskrit lexicographers; but the phrase *gaddarikā-pravāha*, employed by more than one authoritative classical writer, is well known.<sup>1</sup> It appears to have been employed for the first time towards the end of the 10th century by Abhinavagupta in his *Locana* commentary on the *Dhvanyā-loka* (ed. Kāvyamālā 25, Bombay 1911, pp. 86, 125), where the phrase occurs in the form of *gaddarikā-pratāhopahata*<sup>o</sup> or *gaddarikā-pravāha-patita*<sup>o</sup>. The expression also occurs in Mammaṭa's *Vṛtti* (11th century) on his *Kāvya-prakāśa* viii. 2, and in Viśvanātha's *Sāhitya-darpana* (first half of the 14th century) in his *Vṛtti* on vi. 212b. Speaking of the distinction between Guṇa and Alankāra, Mammaṭa criticises and disputes the views of those who reject this distinction as merely based upon blind tradition and says *gaddarikā-pravāheṇaiśām bhedāḥ*. In the same way Viśvanātha, speaking of the distinction admitted by some theorists between the Nātya-lakṣaṇa and the Nātyālankāra, says that, though generically they are the same (*sāmānyata eka-rūpavive'pi*), their distinctive designation is *gaddalikā-pravāheṇa*, which phrase is explained by the commentator Rāmacaraṇa as *gatānugatika-nyāyena* and translated by Pramadadasa Mitra as 'in pursuance of established custom.' It is unfortunate that Viśvanātha's commentary on Mammaṭa's work, where he might have explained this phrase, is not available in print;<sup>2</sup> but some of Mammaṭa's other commentators explain the passage cited above. The *Kāvya-pradīpa* commentary of Govinda (ed. Kāvyamālā 24, 2nd Ed. Bombay 1912, p. 278) explains: *gađdalikā meśi / kācid ekā henacid-dhetunā puro gacchati / itarās tu vinaiva nimitta-vicāram tām*

<sup>1</sup> It is noticed in the *Laukika-nyāyādījali*, pt. i. compiled by G. A. Jacob (3rd ed., Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay 1925, pp. 23-24).

<sup>2</sup> In the commentary on *Sāhitya-darpana*, entitled *Locana*, of Ananta-dāsa, who is said to have been Viśvanātha's son, the passage is explained (ed. Karunakara Kavyatirtha, Lahore 1938, p. 346) thus: *yathā gađdarikā ekāparām tām etarām anugacchati, tādām gatānugata-mātreyo*.

*anugacchanti, tathā.* This explanation is copied almost *verbatim* by Bhīmasena in his *Sudhā-sāgara* commentary (ed. Benares 1924); while other commentators repeat it, more or less, in their own words. Thus, Śrīvidyā-cakravartin, a South Indian commentator, who thinks that the phrase is a proverb or popular saying (Ābhājaka), says in his *Saṃpradāya-prakāśī* commentary (ed. Trivandrum 1926) : *gaddarikā-pravāheṇa barkara-prayāna-nyāyena / ekasyām gaddarikāyām artha-parayālocanām vinaiva purāḥ prayātāyām sarvaiva pāñktis tam eva pāñthānam pramāñikṛtya pravartate/prakrte'py etad evābhānakam āyātam.* Another South Indian commentator, Bhaṭṭa Gopāla, explains more briefly in his *Sāhitya-cūḍāmaṇi* commentary (ed. Trivandrum 1926) : *gaddarikā-pravāheya meṣa-jāti-gamana-nyāyena gatānugatikatā-mātreyā.* Śrīvatsalāñchana, however, in his *Sāra-bhodinī* commentary does not appear to be very certain about the exact meaning of the word *gaddarikā*. He explains it as a statement without the logical *hetu*, in which a distinction is drawn without a difference, but which is followed out of deference to high authority (*bhedakam vīnā bheda-vādād idam ittham iti hetu-sūnyam vaco gaddarikā, tasya guru-gauravavānumodanām pravāhah*); but he accepts also the current explanation which is given by other commentators, and adds in the alternative : *yad vā, gaddarikā meṣī, avicchedena tad-anugamanām pravāhah.* In the same way, Maheśvara, a Bengal commentator, offers a somewhat fanciful alternative explanation, while accepting the usual interpretation. He states that *gaddarikā*, according to some, means a flowing stream of unknown origin (*ajñāta-pravāhā-gama-mūlo dhārā-vāhi nadī-vīśeṣa iti kecit*). Apparently this explanation is a piece of guess-work suggested by the accompanying word *pravāha*; but he adds immediately : *meṣā-yūthair anugamyamānā meṣīty anye / tan-nyāyena bhrānta-parāmparayaiva bhedo vyavahriyate.* These two explanations of Maheśvara are substantially quoted by the compilers of the *Sabda-kalpadruma*, from which they are cited by Böhtlingk and Roth in their *Sanskrit Wörterbuch*.

From the passages cited above it will be clear that the opinions of the commentators, barring obvious conjecture, generally agree in explaining the maxim *gaddarikā-pravāha* as the blind following of a tradition; and the word *gaddarikā*

meaning a female sheep (*meṣī*), the saying is supposed to take its origin from the phenomenon of a flock of sheep following the lead of a female sheep.

But the difficulty in accepting this explanation lies in the fact that no Sanskrit lexicon recognises the word *gaddarikā* or gives it the sense of a female sheep. The only old lexicon which notices the word in the form of *gadḍarī* is the *Desī-nāma-mālā* of Hemacandra (12th century) ii. 84 (ed. Calcutta 1931), where it is, however, explained not as a female sheep but as a sheep-goat (*chāgī*).

The use of the word has not been traced in literature before the 10th century, and it is probable that it came into Sanskrit at a comparatively late date. From its appearance and uncertain etymology, it is undoubtedly easy to take it as a *Desī* word, that is, as a word of unexplained form or unknown origin. But is it possible that *gadḍarikā* is a Prakritic form (re-borrowed in Sanskrit) of a lost Sanskrit word *gandhārikā*, which may have meant a female sheep? The country of *Gandhāra* was well known for its sheep-breeding and famous for its wool. There seems to be a reference to this fact in the well known *Rg-veda* verse (1. 126. 7), in which *Romasā*, on being ridiculed by her husband on her tender age and immaturity, challenges with the words: "I am covered with down all over like an ewe of the *Gandhārins*" (*sārvāham asmi romasā gandhārinām ivāvikā*). The phrase *gandhāriṇām ivāvikā* is thus explained by *Sāyaṇa*: *gandhārā deśāḥ / teśāṁ saṁbandhi-nyavi-jātir iva / tad deśasthā avayo meṣā yalhā romasās tathāham asmi*. The prince *Bhāvya Svanaya*, *Romasā*'s husband, having been probably the ruler of a territory on the *Sindhu*, she was naturally familiar with the ewe for which *Gandhāra* was famous. Originally the phrase might have been *gandhārikā<sup>1</sup> avikā*, "a female sheep of *Gandhāra*", secondarily, the word *gandhārikā* itself came to signify simply a female sheep without any specialised sense. One must recognise that the difficulty of deriving *gadḍarikā* from *gandhārikā* is that no example of the whole series *ndh* → *nd* → *ṇd* → *ḍd* can be found in MIA, and that *ṇd* in NIA normally becomes *ḍ* with compensatory nasalised lengthening of the previous vowel; but the

<sup>1</sup> The Pali Text Society's Dictionary gives *Gandhāra* as an adjective, meaning 'belonging to the *Gandhāra* country'.

series in itself does not seem to be phonetically impossible. It is possible, and perhaps easier to derive the word from the root *gard* 'to sound or roar' (*śabde*) ; but this etymology is too facile and inapposite to be convincing. The word may have, at some time or other, been extended to mean a she-goat ; for we find that the third musical note, called *Gāndhāra*, is supposed to represent the voice of a goat<sup>1</sup>. Hemacandra's explanation would thus be intelligible.

*Woolner Comm. Volume, 1940.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vaijayanti*, *Bhumi-khaṇḍa*, *Sūdrādhya*, ii. 132-33. See also *Śabda-kalpadrava* under *Gāndhāra*.

## AVANTISUNDARI-KATHĀ IN RELATION TO BHĀRAVI AND DANĀDIN

At the Second Session of the Oriental Conference held in Calcutta in 1922 (*Proc. and Trans.*, 1923, pp. 193f). M. Ramakrishna Kavi announced the discovery of two manuscripts containing the texts of an hitherto unknown *Avantisundarī-kathā* in prose and its metrical summary *Avantisundarī-kathā-sāra*, which, in his opinion, threw fresh light on the date and mutual relation of Bhāravi, author of the *Kirātārjunīya* and Danādin, author of the *Daśa-kumāra-carīta*. He has since, under the editorship of Pandit S. K. Rāmanātha Śāstrī, has published these two interesting works in the Dakṣinābhāratī Series, No. 3 (1924) with an introduction which practically reproduces his article on the subject referred to above.

Of these two works, the *Avantisundarī-kathā* is in prose with an introduction in verse, but it is published from a much broken fragment consisting of 18 or 19 hopelessly worm-eaten leaves, which occupy about 25 pages in print. It conforms to the technical requirements of a Kathā, not as indicated by the author of the *Kāvyaśāra* but as given by Rudrata;<sup>1</sup> but it is curious that it contains, after the manner of an Ākhyāyikā,<sup>2</sup> an introductory metrical *namaskriyā* and praise of older poets, followed in the prose part, at the outset, by an account of the poet's family and of his motive in composing the work. From this prose part of the work it is, however, difficult to gather connected information about the author himself, on account of the extremely unsatisfactory nature of the fragmentary text, which contains large lacunae in almost every third line.

But these autobiographical details regarding the author are rendered intelligible by the incomplete metrical summary published along with it and entitled *Avantisundarī-kathā-sāra*. It is apparently of a different and much later authorship.

The "Kathā-sāra" gives the name of the author, presumably of the original story, as Danādin, and sets forth his genea-

<sup>1</sup> See S. K. De, *The Akhyāyikā and the Kathā* in *BSOS*, iii, pp. 508f, 514f, 517 (reprinted in S. K. De, *Some Problems of Skt. Poetics*, p. 65f).

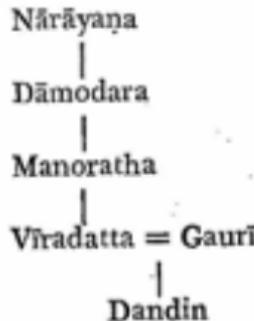
<sup>2</sup> As in Bāna's *Harṣa-carita*.

logy and a somewhat fanciful account of the origin of the work. We are told that a family of Kauśika Brāhmaṇas, who were living in a north-western province, named Ānandapura, migrated to Acalapura in the Nāsikya country, founded by Mūladeva (*mūladeva-nivesita*). There was born Dāmodara from Nārāyaṇa-svāmin, like Ādideva springing from the navel of Nārāyaṇa.<sup>1</sup> Referring to Dāmodara, it goes on to say (i. 22):

*sa medhāvī havir vidvān bhāravīḥ prabhavo girām  
anurudhyāharon maitrīm narendre viṣṇuvardhane.*

Then we are told that while living with Durvinita (who is called *gāṅgeya-kula-dhvaja*, apparently a prince of the Gāṅgā dynasty), he sent an āryā verse to the Pallava king Simhaviṣṇu, who invited him to his court, where Dāmodara appears to have thenceforth lived. He had three sons, of whom Manoratha was the second. Of Manoratha's four sons Vīradatta married Gaurī, and a son named Dāṇḍin, who is the narrator of the story, was born to them. Then the story goes on to give us some accounts of Dāṇḍin who was fostered by Śruta and Sarasvatī, having been rendered orphan in his childhood; and he was well versed, among other things, in the science of architecture. We are not concerned at present with this part of the account.

These details agree substantially with what one can gather from the fragmentary prose narrative. Mention is made of Acalapura and *kuśika-varṇa*, of Dāmodara being born of Nārāyaṇa-svāmin, of Dāmodara's friendship with Viṣṇuvardhana and so forth. Now, from these we get the genealogy of Dāṇḍin who according to the *\*Kathā* and the *\*Kathā-sāra* was the narrator of the story of Avantisundarī thus :



We will try to deal in another paper with the question

<sup>1</sup> *Tasyāḥ nārāyaṇasvāmin-nāmno nārāyaṇodarāt.  
dāmodara iti śrīmān ādideva ivābhāvata.* (i. 21).

whether this Dandin is the same as the author of the *Dasa-kumāra-carita*, and whether the prototype of the latter work is this newly discovered *Avantisundarī-kathā*; but assuming for the present that the two Dandins are identical, our main concern in this paper is to consider the statement of Ramakrishna Kavi that the two texts published here establish that Dandin was the great-grandson in the direct line of the poet Bhāravi. If this opinion can be taken as beyond question, it would prove to be a fact of immense importance in the history of Sanskrit literature.

Unfortunately the published texts have not succeeded in removing all doubts and settling the question definitely. The only place where Bhāravi is mentioned is in the verse quoted above from the *Kathā-sāra*, with reference to Dāmodara who is given as the great-grandfather of Dandin and the whole statement regarding Dandin's relation to Bhāravi stand or fall with this verse alone. The interpretation given to this verse by Ramakrishna Kavi is presumably that Bhāravi is spoken of here as identical with Dāmodara, whose alternative name or alias was such, although it is curious that there is no direct suggestion of such an alias but for the apparently appositional use (assuming the text to be unobjectionable) of the word *bhāravi*, used as a proper name, along with *sah* (he) referring to Dāmodara. But the construction is somewhat peculiar, and one cannot reconcile himself to the abruptness with which Dāmodara is mentioned in the verse as Bhāravi without some words indicating his identification, if it is so intended, with the great Bhāravi of the *Kirātārjunīya*. Is it possible that some qualifying adjective, such as *medhāvī* etc. immediately preceding it, is meant in or for this word? Or, is some pun or simile meant in *bhāravi* or *ravi-prabhava* which would explain the word *anurudhya* better in the context? An emendation is difficult, but the word *bhāravi* in the verse does not look very convincing. It is possible that Dāmodara had the *biruda* of Bhāravi; but if one assumes that the name of the great poet of *Kirātārjunīya* was itself a *biruda*, his real name having been Dāmodara, one would not be supported either by Sanskrit literature so far, or by any tradition authenticating such speculation regarding the well-known poet Bhāravi.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A poet Dāmodara, Dāmodarabhaṭṭa or Dāmodaradeva is quoted

On the other hand, assuming the verse in question to be impeccable, it is somewhat disconcerting to find nothing in the original prose *Avantisundari-kathā* itself to support this reading or this proposed identification of Bhāravi with Dāmodara, the great-grandfather of Daṇḍin. The passage in the prose-narrative corresponding to this verse in the metrical summary runs thus (p. 6) :

(nū)ṛāyāna-svāmino nābhi-padma iva brahmaika-dhūma  
dāmodara-svāmi-nāmā tameta (?).....sarvāṅga-maṇoharayā  
sarvajñayā vidagdhayā serva-bhāṣā-pravīṇayā pramāṇa-yuktayā  
lalita-pada-vinyāsa.....sneham asvajyata.

Again,

yataḥ hausi(ka).....va pupya-harmapi viṣṇuvardhan-  
ākhye rāja-sūnau pranayam anvabadhna.†

Dāmodara is mentioned again at p. 7, but his other and more famous name (if it was so) viz., Bhāravi, is nowhere alluded to or coupled with his real name. On the other hand, in the metrical introduction (p. 3, verse 22) of the prose-story, the author refers apparently to himself as *dāmodara-vāṇītāja* and not as *bhāravi-vāṇītāja* which would certainly have served as a better introduction of himself to his public. If he was really a descendant of the great poet Bhāravi, he should have been naturally proud of his illustrious literary lineage and would have taken enough care to apprise his reader of the fact. It is surely too much to rely upon a doubtful verse of a later summary of presumably different authorship and theorise on its basis upon the relation of Bhāravi and Daṇḍin with any complacent assurance. It is not suggested that the genealogy of Daṇḍin, the author or narrator of the *Avantisundari-kathā*, as given here is unreliable; but one cannot readily accept the relationship of this Daṇḍin (whoever he was) with Bhāravi sought to be made out on the authority of this verse alone. On the other hand, the probable date of Bhāravi, who was certainly later than Kālidāsa but earlier than the Aihole inscription of 634 A.D. in which he already appears as famous, would roughly coincide with that of Simhaviṣṇu of the Pallava

independently of Bhāravi, in the anthologies *Sārkāḍhara-paddhati*, *Sudukti-karṇāmṛta*, *Padyārvalī* as well as in *Bhoja-prabandha*.

† In these quotations, the dots, indicating lacunae, are given as in the printed text.

dynasty, and the mention of this prince in this connexion in the text would make one pause before he can sweepingly reject the theory set forth by Ramakrishna Kavi. All that can be said for the present is that the theory cannot be taken as settled or beyond question until other data are forthcoming to corroborate this unique verse, which is itself of doubtful authority.

Apart from this question of literary chronology, however, there can be no doubt that these works are important publications, for which the learned editors deserve all credit, even though it is a great pity that the *Avantisundari-kathā* could not be recovered except as a hopeless mass of fragments. These works are of great interest in view of the question of their relation to the *Dāta-kumāra-carita* and its author Daṇḍin; which question, however, would require a detailed study and cannot be discussed within the limited scope of this paper.

#### *A Further Note on the Avantisundari-kathā*

In the article on Bhāravi and Daṇḍin in *IHQ*, vol. i, pp. 31f., (as given above) an attempt was made to shew that the data furnished by M. Ramakrishna Kavi in his edition of the prose *Avantisundari-kathā*, attributed to Daṇḍin, and its anonymous metrical summary *Avantisundari-kathā-sāra* (referred to below as *Kāthā* and *Kāthā-sāra* respectively) are not conclusive with regard to his theory of the relationship of Bhāravi and Daṇḍin. The only place where Bhāravi is directly mentioned in the printed texts is in a verse in the *Kāthā-sāra*, which runs thus :

sa medhāvī kavir vidvān bhāravīḥ prabhavo girām,  
anurudhyākaron maitrīm narendre viṣṇuvardhane ||

It has already been pointed out that this verse does not appear plausible in its readings and is therefore of doubtful import. The corresponding prose passage in the *Kāthā*,<sup>1</sup> as printed by Ramakrishna Kavi, is also hopelessly fragmentary and not at all clear. The name of Bhāravi, at least, does occur in it so that a statement or theory, which is based upon this solitary and doubtful verse in an admittedly late metrical summary

<sup>1</sup> The passage reads thus : yatoḥ kauśi.....va  
puṇya-karmanī viṣṇuvardhāṇḍkhye rāja-sīnau propayam anubadhnāt.

and which is not supported by anything in the prose original, could not be accepted as authoritative or conclusive.

These doubts are now confirmed, and further light thrown upon this question by G. Harihara Sastri, who has succeeded in obtaining an extract of the passage in question from another palm-leaf MS of the prose *Kathā* in the collection of the Department for Publication of Sanskrit MSS at Trivandrum, and who has contributed a short paper on this subject to the Allahabad Oriental Conference, held in November, 1926. In the summary of his paper, printed by the Conference (p. 45),<sup>1</sup> he has given the passage in question, which, as we have already noted, is fragmentary in Kavi's edition of the text. Here is an extract from it relevant to our discussion :

*Yataḥ kaufika-kumāro (= Dāmodaraḥ) mahāśaivam mahā-  
prabhāvah pradīpta-bhāsah bhāravim ravim ivendur anurud-  
dhya darśa iva punya-karmanī viṣṇuvardhanākhye rāja-sūnau  
pranayam anvabadhnaḥ.*

It is clear that the author of the metrical summary must have been summarising this prose passage in the verse quoted above, as closely as possible; but this quotation also makes it clear that some emendations are necessary in this verse (as given in the printed text) to make it consistent and intelligible. The verb *anurudhya* in the verse stands—somewhat strangely—without an object, but this quotation makes it likely that we should read *bhāravim* and *prabhāvah* *girām* in the first line and construe them as the missing object to this verb. Let us now quote G. Harihara Sastri's remarks in this connexion : "It is evident, therefore, that the words *bhāravīḥ* and *prabhāvah* ending in *visarga*, which in the verse being construed as referring to *sah* (Dāmodara) has led Kavi to infer that Bhāravi and Dāmodara were identical, should be read as *bhāravim* and *prabhavam*. What we learn from the prose and metrical quotations is that Bhāravi was a Śaivite (*mahāśaiva*) and a great poet (*girām prabhavah*) attached to the prince Viṣṇuvardhana, and that Dāmodara, who was also endowed

<sup>1</sup> After this article was sent for publication, G. Harihara Sastri had printed his Conference paper (to which it was wanted to draw attention) in *IHQ.*, vol. iii, no. 1, pp. 169f.

with poetical gifts of a high order, secured the friendship of the prince through the medium of Bhāravi."

On the evidence of the MS, all these conclusions with regard to Bhāravi may be accepted as plausible. And Bhāravi may further be assigned to the commencement of the 7th century A.D. The narrative in the *Kathā* mentions Sīnhavīṣṇu, the Pallava king of Kāñcī, and Durvīnīta, the Gaṅga king as contemporaries of Viṣṇuvārdhana. G. Harihara Sastri points out that three kings of the same name are revealed by the inscriptions as rulers of various provinces of the Dekkan in the beginning of the 7th century. On the other hand, the probable date of Bhāravi, who appears to have been already famous in the Aihole Inscription of 634 A.D., would roughly coincide with the dates of these rulers, with one of whom he is actually associated in this MS. If Bhāravi thus belongs roughly to the end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th century, the date of Daṇḍīn, the supposed author of the *Kathā*, who is given as fourth in descent from Bhāravi's contemporary Dāmodara, would approximately fall towards the close of the 7th and beginning of the 8th century. But Kavi's bold conjecture that Bhāravi was the great-grandfather of Daṇḍīn vanishes into thin air !

But the question still remains as to whether this Daṇḍīn is the same as the author of the *Daśa-kumāra-carita*, who also bore the same name. Of course, the name of the author cannot be discovered anywhere in the printed text of the *Kathā*, but taking into consideration the probability that the *Kathā-sāra* is a faithful summary of the original, there is no reason to doubt that in the original prose *Kathā*, one Daṇḍīn was presented as the narrator of the story. The question, therefore, naturally arises as to whether this Daṇḍīn is identical with the Daṇḍīn of the *Daśa-kumāra-carita* (hereafter referred to as *Dkc*) ; and if so, what relation this newly discovered *Kathā* bears to *Dkc*, which also contains in the Prelude the story of Avantisundarī.

It is well known that the *Dkc*, as now extant, shares with Bāṇa's two romances the peculiarity of having been left unfinished ; but it also lacks an authentic beginning. The end is usually supplied by a supplement often called *Uttara-pīṭhikā* or *Seṣa*, which is now known to be the work of a late Dekkan-

author, Cakrapāṇi Dīkṣita, and with which we are not concerned here. The beginning is found in a *Pūrvapīṭhikā* or Prelude, which is believed on good grounds to be the work of some other hand and not composed by Dāṇḍin. The title *Daśa-kumāra-carita* indicates that we are to expect accounts of the adventure of ten princes; but Dāṇḍin's work proper (excluding the Prelude and the Supplement) gives us eight of these in eight Ucchvāsas. The *Pūrvapīṭhikā*, therefore, was intended to supply the framework as well as the history of two more princes, while the *Uttara-pīṭhikā* undertook to conclude the story of Viśruta left incomplete at the last chapter of Dāṇḍin's work. It is to be noted, however, that the *Pūrvapīṭhikā* is extant in various forms, and the details of the tales do not agree in all versions. Of these, the version which begins with the verse *brahmāṇḍa-chatra-dayādah* and narrates the story of Puṣpodbhava and Somadatta (along with that of Rājavāhana and Avantisundarī) in five Ucchavāsas, is the usually accepted one, found in most MSS and printed editions. We shall refer to it below as the usual Prelude.<sup>1</sup> In this usual Prelude, there are, however, definite divergences in respect of some matters of fact from the main text of Dāṇḍin; and as Kavi himself points out, the main text is written in good style, compared with which the style of the Prelude is "stale". These and other reasons, which we need not detail here,<sup>2</sup> have led scholars to doubt the authenticity of the usual Prelude. Wilson ventured the conjecture that the Prelude might be regarded as the work of one of Dāṇḍin's disciples; but in view of the various forms in which it is now known to exist, this conjecture must either be discarded or modified to the extent of presuming more than one disciple of Dāṇḍin's, each of whom must be supposed to have tried his hand, according to his own fancy and literary ability, to complete the master's incomplete

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that the usual metrical *namasbriyā* required by theory at the beginning of a *Kathā* is not present in this Prelude, but it plunges into the narrative at once with the solitary verse referred to above. This verse *brahmāṇḍa-chatra*<sup>3</sup> is quoted anonymously by Bhoja in his *Sarasvatī-kāṇṭhābharanā* (ed. Borooah, 1884, p. 114); and this fact would indicate that the Prelude must have been prefixed at a very early time, at least some time before the 11th century A.D.

<sup>2</sup> For the arguments, see Agashe's Introd. to *Daśakumāra*<sup>2</sup> (ed. Bomb. 'Sanak. Series).

masterpiece ! At any rate, it will be enough for our purpose to presume that the original *Pūrva-piṭhikā*, composed by Daṇḍin himself, must have been, for some reason or other, lost ; and attempts were made to supply the deficiency by later ambitious authors, who might or might not have been Daṇḍin's pupils.

Now, Ramkrishna Kavi seems to suggest that the prose *Avantisundari-kathā*, discovered by him and attributed to Daṇḍin is the lost *Pūrva-piṭhikā* of the *Daṭṭa-kumāra-carita*.

Unfortunately, the extent of the work, as now recovered, is too slight and its character too fragmentary to give us a definite and convincing solution to the question. For its contents (even of the slight portion recovered) we have to depend entirely on the metrical *Kāṭhā-sāra*, presuming it to be a faithful, if late, summary of the original. But certain features presented even by this hopeless fragment of 25 pages seem to throw doubt on Kavi's supposition, in support of which no other argument except the presence of a common theme and a supposed common authorship has been brought forward.

One of the main grounds on which a critic of Sanskrit literature would object to accept the *Kathā* as the lost Prelude to the *Dkc* is the extraordinary divergence of style between the two works, a point which cannot fail to strike even the most careless reader. If they are indeed by the same author and formed parts of the same work, one should expect an evenness of style in the two, unless it is presumed without good grounds that the author intended a more elaborate and florid style for the Prelude and a simpler and more vigorous style for the work itself. The twenty-five pages of the fragment of the *Kathā* that have been printed are taken up (leaving aside the metrical *namaskriyā* and the introductory prose account of the narrator himself) entirely with the account of the parents of Rājavāhana, king Rājaharīsa of Magadha and his queen Vasumatī, their union and amorous sports. In the usual Prelude, this topic is dismissed, in proper imitation of Daṇḍin's usual method and style, in a few lines. The metrical summary devotes some sixteen verses to this erotic topic, which was thus undoubtedly an elaborate affair in the original *Kathā*, as this conclusion is also indicated by the recovered fragmentary portion of the *Kathā* itself which devotes several pages to it.

Judging from the extent of this episode and the leisurely way of proceeding with the story, one should think that the lost *Kathā* was probably an independent composition, enormous in bulk, and could not have been intended as a Prelude to the *Dkc*. The erotic elaboration is in the right orthodox style of the later Kāvyas; but such extended scale of elaborate descriptive writing is more suited to the romances of the type of *Kādambarī* than to *Dkc*, the prose style and treatment of which are saved from this tendency to over-elaboration, and are reasonably simple, direct and elegant. We have in this part of the *Kathā*, as in the *Kādambarī* or *Harṣa-carita*, the same love for long rolling compounds, the same stringing of epithets and similes, the same weakness for the jingling of alliterative sounds, for complex puns, for involved constructions, for sesquipedalian sentences having one subject and one verb either at the beginning or at the end, but beaten out with a generous supply of epithetic clauses upon clauses, which cease only when the author's ingenuity has for the moment exhausted itself. Kavi himself admits that "he *Avantisundarī-kathā* in style resembles *Kādambarī*, but it is less monotonous and more difficult"; he might have added that it least resembles the *Dkc* in this respect. No doubt, the author of the *Dkc* possesses descriptive power in a high degree, and one may quite pertinently refer to such passages as the description of the sleeping Ambālikā, where he indulges in this trick of florid description. But even here he never goes beyond moderate limits; and such descriptions occur only rarely in the *Dkc* and never ranges over more than a few lines or even one printed page. He attempts a brilliant *tour de force* (as in *Ucchvāsa* vii), but wisely limits himself to a sparing use of it, only when it is happily motified; and his employment of alliteration, chiming and other verbal tricks are not so free and cloying as we find it in the works of Subandhu and Bāṇa. It is not maintained that the author of the *Dkc* makes no pretension to ornament, but in the main his use of it is effective, limited and pretty, and not recondite, incessant and tiresome. In the published *Kathā*, which affiliates itself in style and method to elaborate poetic romances like the *Kādambarī*, one fails to find those characteristics which give a distinction to the *Dkc* and make it a unique masterpiece in Sanskrit prose literature.

Turning to the story itself, the *Kathā* does not help us, for the portion recovered and printed breaks off with the union of Rājahatīsa and his queen Vasumati, and the hero Rājavāhana himself is not yet born. But taking the *Kathā-sāra* as giving us a faithful summary of the incompletely recovered original, we can profitably compare its method of story-telling with that pursued in the *Dhc*. In the usual Prelude, the preliminary story of Rājavāhana and Avantisundari is given in five Ucchvāsas, but this includes also the adventures of Somadatta and Puṣpodbhava after their separation from Rājavāhana. This trend of the story is followed, but the *Kathā-sāra* gives it in seven chapters (which probably indicates that the original *Kathā* had about the same number of chapters), but even with this extent it breaks off without completing the story. The sequence of the constituent tales and incidents are also not the same. Rājavāhana's adventure in the underworld is told in ch. v, while ch. vi and vii relate the adventures of Puṣpodbhava and Somadatta respectively; in the usual Prelude, the adventures of these two princes are given in the reverse order in Ucchvāsas iii and iv respectively while that of Rājavāhana is told in Ucchvāsa ii. Nothing, of course, can be concluded from this change of order, for the various versions differ from each other in this respect, as well as in respect of some details of names and incidents. But when we take into consideration the *manner* of story-telling, we perceive a marked difference. It is noteworthy that we find in the *Kathā* what we do not find in the *Dhc*, viz., a tendency towards beating out the main story with numerous episodes, repetition of old legends, side-stories and digressions. No doubt, the episodic method of story-telling is very old in Indian literature and obtains from the time of the *Bṛhatkathā* or even earlier: but in the *Dhc* itself, such subsidiary tales never hamper or hold up the main thread of the narrative, in such a way as we find in the *Kathā*. In ch. iv of the *Kathā* (as summarised in the *Kathā-sāra*), for instance, the king begins to narrate previous history in detail to his queen, and the interpolation of episodic stories like those of Vararuci, Vyādi, king Mahāpadma, Cāṇakya and so forth makes us believe that the work was written after the manner and model of the *Bṛhatkathā*, in which also most of these stories occurred (as we

know from Somadeva's and Kṣemendra's Sanskrit versions). In the same way, the legends of Śūdraka, Śaunaka, Mūladeva and Samudradatta are brought in to embellish the main story. All the stories cannot strictly be taken as relevant, but in some of them, the object in introducing heroes and heroines of old is to maintain, in the form of rebirth, an intimate connexion between these ancient heroes and the chief characters of the story. In the Prelude to *Dhc*, this device is employed only once where Rājavāhana alludes to the curse pronounced on him in a former birth when Avantisundarī was also his wife, but this incident is skilfully interwoven into the plot itself. It seems, therefore, that the author of the *Kathā* (whoever he was) carried this trick to its utmost possibilities and introduced in imitation a large number of stories of reborn heroes and heroines. It is also remarkable that the whole of the story of *Kādambarī*, as set forth up to the end of Bāṇa's portion of the work, is interpolated in ch. v of the *Kathā-sāra*. In ch. iii, again, it is predicted that Rājavāhana would have a brother, named Hamsavāhana, who would conquer the three worlds; possibly the author had also the intention of narrating his exploits or bringing him in as a character. This manner of story-telling and the enclosing of narrative within narrative as well as the leisurely and extended scale of descriptive writing that is adopted in the *Kathā*, would make one legitimately suspect that the work was probably an independent treatment of the story of Avantisundarī with a large infusion of relevant or irrelevant episodic tales, derived from other sources, and could not possibly have been the lost Prelude to *Dhc*.

If this conclusion is accepted, explanation of the common theme, viz., the story of Rājavāhana and Avantisundarī, does not present any difficulty. Nor should the fact of a common theme urge us to accept this *Kathā* as the lost Prelude to the *Dhc*. It is probable that some later author, ambitious of writing a romance in the approved vein of Bāṇa's works (with which he appears to have been well acquainted), simply took this story of Avantisundarī from the original lost Prelude of the *Dhc* and embellished it in the approved fashion. It is not at all clear from the texts that the actual authorship of the *Kathā* itself is attributed to Daṇḍin or even belonged to him, but rather the anonymous author of the *Kathā* gives us at the

beginning a story, half biographical and half fanciful, of Dandin, who was the author of the original source of the *Kathā*, introducing him as the narrator of the main story and setting forth his motives of narration. Otherwise, the presence of supernatural elements in this part of the *Kathā* is hard to explain ; for it does not stand to reason that Dandin himself introduced the supernatural incident in his own biographical account in connection with himself. It is also noteworthy that no trace of such biographical and supernatural stories is to be found in any known version of the Prelude to *Dks*. The common theme and the supposed common authorship may thus be reasonably explained ; and if this is agreed to, there is no other ground on which the *Kathā* can be taken as the lost Prelude to the *Dkc*.

It may also be pointed out that the *Avantisundari-kathā* commences with 26 introductory stanzas in the *śloka* or *anuṣṭubh* metre concluding this preliminary part with a verse in *āryā*. These verses contain an obeisance (*namaskriyā*) to Isāna and homage to Vyāsa and Vālmīki, and then dwell upon poets and poetry generally, incidentally praising great poets and poems of the past and mentioning the author's motive in composing his work. After this comes the prose story, the preliminary part of which gives us an account of Dandin and his family, making him the narrator of the main story, which is said to have been related by him to his friends. If we take the *Harṣa-carita* as a typical surviving specimen of the later Ākhyāyikā, it will be seen at once that our so-called *Kathā* really conforms to the established tradition and requirements of an Ākhyāyikā and not of a *Kathā*. In the *Harṣa-carita*, we have a similar metrical obeisance to Śiva and Pārvatī and homage to Vyāsa, followed by several verses in praise of older poets and poems (all in the *śloka* or *anuṣṭubh* metre) and concluding in a *jagatī* verse which praises Harṣa, devotion to whom supplies the motive of Bāṇa's literary venture. In the preliminary prose part of the *Harṣa carita*, again, we have also a rather lengthy account of the poet's youth, his reception at the court of Harṣa, his return to his native country and the relation of the story to his relatives. From this it is clear that the author of the *Avantisundari-kathā* very closely follows the model of the *Harṣa-carita*, which however is designated an

Ākhyāyikā and not a Kathā. No doubt, a Kathā has an introductory metrical *namashriyā* of a different kind to *devas* and *gurus*, a statement of the author's family and his motives of authorship; and all these elements are to be found in Bāna's *Kādambarī*. But in a Kathā there is no metrical praise of older poets and poems, and the preliminary prose portion does not contain any biographical account of the poet but plunges directly into the narrative.

It is well known that Dandin, the author of the *Kāvya-*  
*darśa*, refuses to admit the fine distinctions made by theorists between a Kathā and an Ākhyāyikā; but his own definition of these two species of prose composition is entirely negative and does not help us in fixing his conception of them. It is not until we come to Rudraṇa, who has accepted and generalised the characteristics of Bāna's two works into universal rules governing the composition of the Kathā and the Ākhyāyikā respectively, that we find these two species entirely stereotyped in theory. It is possible, therefore, that the *Avantisundarī-*  
*kathā* was composed before this fixing of characteristics in Rudraṇa's time; and this would explain the apparent confusion of the characteristics of a Kathā and Ākhyāyikā made by its author. But he could not have been very far from the time of the author of the *Dkc*, whose work he utilises and whose biographical details were not yet entirely lost in his time<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See *Indian Historical Quarterly*, I, 1925 and II, 1927.

<sup>1</sup> A revised edition of the *Avantisundarī-kathā* has been published now in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, 1954; it is much fuller than the fragmentary text of Ramakrishna Kavi, but it still contains large lacunae.

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